

ILLUSTRATED TIMES

(THE RIGHT OF TRANSLATION AND REPRODUCING ILLUSTRATIONS IS RESERVED.)

No. 94.—Vol. 4.

LONDON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1857.

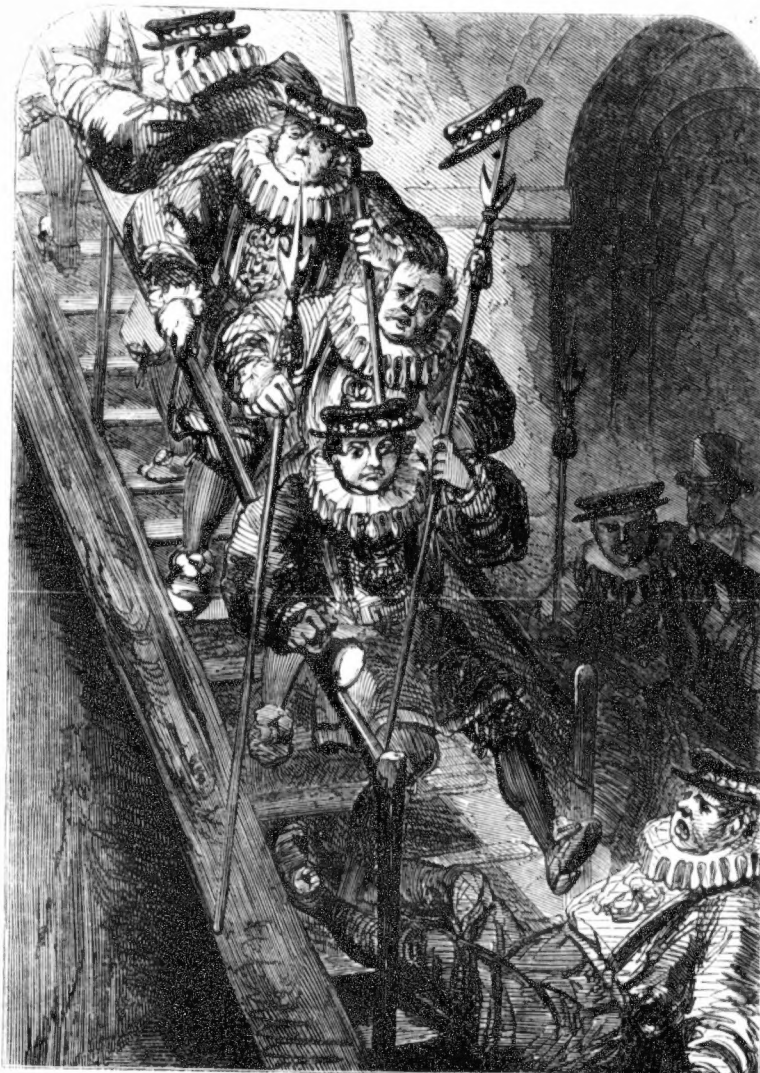
PRICE 2½D.—STAMPED, 3½D.

PROSPECTS OF REFORM.

We should premise that we do not use the word "reform" in the narrow and technical meaning by which it is made to stand for extension of suffrage. What our prospects may be in *that* line, we shall no doubt hear when any politician has power to gain by proposing it. Meanwhile, let us glance at the most pressing, necessary, and solid reforms, which may be expected to engage the attention of Parliament this session. There are great moral, social, and political questions waiting their time, and we may as well begin upon them early.

Foreign policy somehow always takes the place of honour in English discussions. It is the more dignified department—just as the costliest and "swellest" objects of social life are of foreign manufacture. Well, the English will have this year to pronounce on two important questions of principle in foreign policy. First, the propriety of intervention in Europe; second, the propriety of extension in the East. Manchester is determined to bring these to some kind of issue, unless the politicians of that town have deceived us much. Now, on the intervention question *we* are with Manchester, though not for Manchester's reasons. We are for leaving alone other people's business, and yet for being always ready to defend our own dignity. We would not (if we could) raise Poland, but we would have an army and navy ever capable of holding its own against Poland's master. What "reforms" are needed to carry out these views efficiently?

Of course, it is only public opinion that can check that tendency to intervention which is so natural to a certain class of Ministers, and which gratifies the pride of a body like our diplomacy. The public have seen lately how little mere intervention of the common kind can do. On the other hand, let nobody fancy that foreigners look down on our capacity for making ourselves formidable in the legitimate way. All we want towards that object is the same amount of regard bestowed on military reforms which is bestowed on a score of others. But what did the general public know or care of military reforms till the other day? Why, before the war, it contented itself



YEOMEN OF THE GUARD DESCENDING TO THE VAULTS BELOW THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

with occasional jokes at the Albert hat. All it cared to believe about our soldiers was, that, if need be, they could fight as well as ever; and in this particular it was surely not disappointed. Now it sees, that in an age in which war had gone out of fashion everything about war had been neglected; and—no longer believing in millenniums—it is eager to see reforms, which will enable us (if need be) to go to work next time with more efficiency and less waste.

Here it becomes necessary to protest at once against the downright immorality with which the delinquents of the war, and the commissioners, have been treated. No measures are of any use, if the principles of justice and fair play be lost sight of by those whose business it is to administer measures. Indeed, army education itself would be of little good, if the army continued to be governed without reference to merit. By increasing the culture of the army, you would only increase its discontent,—you would make your scandals more glaring. Accordingly, it is the duty of Parliament—as a preliminary to army reform—to insist on justice to Tulloch and McNeill; and we hope to see the Opposition producing an able exposure of the ingratitude with which Government has shown them the "cold shoulder." The whole question will then come up again, and we shall enter on army questions with more hopefulness and gusto. Let us hope that we shall be able to fix their respective shares of blame on the authorities at home and abroad more accurately than now; and at the same time—with all due thanks to Mr. Russell, of the "Times," for what he did—let us hear him explain the error by which Lord Raglan was described as never visiting the camp. We repeat, that all military improvement must start from justice to military reputations. If there be false honours and unmerited neglect everywhere conspicuous, it is vain to occupy time in discussing how to improve guns.

The country, we think (having feasted *its* men), will now look more closely into the Government's men; but we are perfectly certain it will enter into the whole question with no wish to reduce military expenditure for the mere sake of reduction, or apart from the need of a thoroughly competent force.



SEARCHING THE VAULTS PREPARATORY TO THE ASSEMBLING OF PARLIAMENT.

Turning to the question of the country's extension in the East, Manchester is still less likely to have affairs its own way. We are "in" for a final settlement with the Chinese, which shall determine our relations to them for years to come; and mean as the immediate cause of quarrel with Persia no doubt is, yet, if the difficulty prove more permanent than is expected, what are we to do? Our position as an Asiatic Power must be maintained, at the risk of having to accept unworthy beginnings of action to follow up. This may not be abstractly pure, but we have to consider what is politically necessary. However, a searching critique of our diplomacy and policy in these regions will be an early result of the quarrel. And it is impossible to lay down permanent rules—to abstain from all extension, for instance—without contradicting the principles by which our forefathers gained for us our most important foreign possessions.

With regard to "reform" proper, by which we mean (as it is generally supposed to mean) constitutional alteration, it is a matter which must entirely depend on details. The principle that the political power of the kingdom shall be from time to time opened to new classes, was solemnly adopted into the Constitution in 1832. At present, therefore, a scheme for extending that principle must be judged by itself—by its own especial merits. The fault of any such measure as we are likely to see brought forward, is of course the old one—that it is pretty sure to be drawn up with especial reference to the party which produces it. We should be sure to see over again some of those delicate manoeuvres, by which Tavistock always escaped the fatal schedules at the time of the Reform Bill. It has been the fortune of the Russells, in their various movements for the benefit of England, always to manage to improve, or at least to secure, their property. And whatever scheme Lord John may bring forward during the present session in this line, ought to be met with a very severe scrutiny.

Legal reforms are pressing necessary, and the distinct promise of them in the Queen's Speech is encouraging. The present enormous expensiveness of the law is one of the heaviest of our domestic nuisances. Here is the British Bank, lying a helpless wreck on the beach, and plundered by all legal comers, under a system which absolutely professes to enable shareholders to "wind-up" satisfactorily. Financial reform is equally wanted,—to relieve us from such anomalous imposts as the income-tax,—to abolish blundering extravagance, which does good to nobody (not even to those who gain pecuniarily by it),—and to adjust the necessary public burdens in the manner most comfortable to the public back. Criminal reform has now become a question so vast and interesting, that it seems absurd to speak of it in a paragraph. The choice lies between transportation and labour-prisons. We should support the first, if we saw the possibility of it as clearly as some people profess to do; but any way, the ticket-of-leave system is doomed, and the present way of treating crime must undergo complete revision.

What with one reform and another urgently required, this ought to be an active, earnest, and productive session. If it is not so, however, the fault will be very much that of the country, which, with a dissolution coming off next year at the latest, can work on the House more effectually than at ordinary times. Our fear is, that the "foreign" interests will get and keep the upper hand through the summer, and it is the duty of sensible men to fight against that tendency.

Foreign Intelligence.

FRANCE.

THE French frigate *La Sybille* has received orders to proceed from Bombay, her present station, to the Persian Gulf. This movement is not connected with any political object, as France has no commercial relations to protect in those waters.

Orders have been sent to Toulon for the immediate departure of a fleet for China. The force will probably consist of two or three vessels of the line, besides frigates.

A camp of two divisions of Cavalry and four divisions of Infantry (in all 40,000 men) is to be formed this year at Suippes (Marne), a place in Champagne. A detachment of Sappers has just left Metz for Suippes.

In order to gradually reduce the army to a peace footing, the Emperor has just ordered 46,000 temporary and renewable furloughs to be granted. Similar ones, to the number of 95,000, had been previously issued, making the total of the soldiers thus sent to their homes for an unlimited period 141,000.

The Paris Court of Cassation recently pronounced judgment on an appeal from an important decision of the Imperial Court of Lyons. The inferior court had decided that it is illegal to distribute electoral bulletins or voting-tickets without the permission of the Prefect; the Court of Cassation has confirmed the judgment of the court below. Much interest is taken in this question, as the electors hold that there is no freedom of election without freedom in the distribution of tickets.

The Russian Ambassador, Count Kisselef, has left Paris for Nice. His return to Paris is fixed for the 18th.

The Grand Duke Constantine is expected at Paris about the middle of April.

SPAIN.

THE Queen is now visiting the Southern provinces of the kingdom, and it is feared that on her return she will adopt some rigorous measures.

Several Moors presented themselves at the Mantelete Gate of the town of Melia, on the 11th ult., on pretext of selling eggs, but suddenly drawing pistols from beneath their dress, they fired on the soldiers on duty, killing two men and wounding a third, after which they took to flight. The soldiers who were unhurt returned their fire, and wounded two of the men, but the Moors carried them off. The detachment on duty at the guard-house immediately turned out, but the Moors were too far to be overtaken. In consequence of this affair, it has been determined to admit no more Moors into the town.

PRUSSIA AND SWITZERLAND.

A LETTER from Berne, of the 29th of January, gives the following as the instructions transmitted to the Swiss Envoy Extraordinary at Paris by the Federal Council:—1. The Confederation cannot grant the King of Prussia the right to maintain the title of Prince of Neuchâtel; as an independent state, it cannot acknowledge such a title. 2. The re-establishment of the bourgeoisie is inadmissible. 3. The pretensions of the King of Prussia to the domains are rejected, as they never were his private property. 4. No private guarantees can be given to the Royalists, inasmuch as they are already guaranteed by the Federal and Cantonal constitution.

The preliminaries of the conference at which the Neuchâtel question is to be decided are not yet settled—at least not at the time at which we go to press. The French Cabinet, we hear, intends so to manage matters that Dr. Kern, the Envoy Extraordinary of the Swiss Confederation, and Count Hatzfeld, the Prussian Minister, shall settle beforehand the terms on which the King of Prussia will consent to renounce his sovereign rights in Neuchâtel.

RUSSIA AND PERSIA.

GENERAL CHREULFF, the commander of the Russian corps on the frontiers of Persia, has been summoned to St. Petersburg, "where," says the "Czas," "he will receive instructions how to act should it be necessary to advance into Central Asia." In the Russian capital General Chreulff meets the Commander of the East Siberian Squadron, the Governor of East Siberia, and Adjutant General Mouraviev I., the late Commander-in-Chief of the Caucasus army, "who is more intimately acquainted with the state of things in Central Asia than any other Russian general."

"Le Nord" publishes a despatch from Teheran of December 21, which

has been received at St Petersburg. It states that the Persian Government were by that time informed of the English force having taken possession of a Fort in the neighbourhood of Bushire, and that 50,000 Persian troops had been sent to the invaded province.

ITALY.

FREQUENT arrests continue to be made in Naples, and the fears of the King seem to be on the increase. His Majesty has quitted Naples. He went to Capri on the 12th—his birthday. He was expected to have travelled by railway; but it is said that his Majesty, who is afraid of powder, of lucifer matches, and of gas, begins now to have a horror of railways. He travelled in an open carriage, surrounded by two squadrons of hussars. A convention has been signed between the King of Naples and the Argentine Republic for the cession of a portion of territory to which political prisoners will be sent at the expiration of the delay granted them to choose between a request for pardon and being sent into exile.

It is stated that the English and French Governments have instructed their respective ambassadors to intimate to the Austrian Government their great satisfaction at the conduct of the young Emperor at Milan in granting so complete an amnesty. The departure of the Emperor and Empress of Austria from Lombardy, which had been fixed for the 27th ult., is postponed till February 5th, in consequence of the better feeling which it is expected will be exhibited by the population in return for the amnesty.

The King of Sardinia left Nice at midnight on the 28th, and returned to Genoa by the Cornice Road, which was illuminated for some distance on his way. The people of Nice assembled in front of the palace, and greeted him as he came out with cordial cheers. A company of young men, with torches in their hands, preceded his carriage, and lighted him through the gates of the town.

The Attorney-General of Turin has caused all the copies of an ode, composed by a M. Guiseppe del Re, in honour of Milano, to be seized, on the ground that it glorifies political assassination. The author is to be prosecuted.

The Pope has given 55,000 francs from his privy purse to the indigent, for employing them on the high roads.

TURKEY AND THE EAST.

LETTERS received from the Black Sea fleet, at moorings in Bujukdere Bay, mention the dread that is entertained by all at having to remain in the Bosphorus until the end of March. Lord Lyons is, however, encouraging the amusement which theatrical entertainments afford to the crews on board the ships.

The members of the Danubian Boundary Commission who were at Constantinople have left that city for Ismail, where they arrived in the evening of the 17th ult., it seems. They were to set out immediately for Upper Yalpuq, where Staff-Lieutenant-Colonel Besson, the French commissioner, was tracing out the new district of Komrat.

Sir Henry Bulwer, the English delegate to the commission for settling the constitution of the Divans, had a very hot altercation with Lord Stratford de Redcliffe at the last mixed conference. He asserted that the Ambassador had kept him in entire ignorance of the progress of the discussion, while the other members had been duly informed. He added that he saw lamentable omissions in the firman. Lord Stratford retorted very bitterly, admitting, however, that he had acted contrary to his instructions, but adding that he would explain himself to his Government, and not to Sir Henry. It is said that Redschid Pacha interposed to stop the dispute.

The Austrians have already begun to evacuate the Danubian Principalities, and have stopped all their contracts, in several cases paying a forfeit for doing so. A Turkish corps d'armée will take the place of the Austrians, and occupy the Principalities up to the time of their final organisation. Another corps d'armée is to be concentrated at Erzerum and on the Persian frontier.

PERSIA.

THE "Pays" states that the Governor of Candahar went to Ferah on Dec. 14, where he had a friendly interview with the Commander-in-Chief of the Persian army. The French journal draws from this news, joined to the fact of the departure for Teheran of envoys from certain Afghan tribes, the inference that Afghanistan is altogether favourable to Persia, and that the taking of Bushire being thus amply counterbalanced, the Shah is in a position to make concessions, and the chances of peace are considerably augmented.

Haidar Khan, at the head of a cavalry brigade, has taken Furrah, and is advancing to attack the Persian army under Murad Khan.

An English division, under Sir John Lawrence, is marching towards Candahar.

New taxes for defraying the war expenses are imposed in Persia.

AMERICA.

CONGRESS has appointed a committee to investigate the charge of corruption made against certain of its members.

Governor Reeder, backed by the Free State men of Kansas, contests General Whitfield's right to sit in the House of Representatives as delegate from Kansas.

A despatch from Albion, N.Y., states that a riot had occurred in that town between some Irish labourers on the canal and a party of Americans. Two men had been killed, and several were so desperately wounded that their lives were despaired of. Whisky was the prime cause of the affray.

The news from California is important. The Supreme Court had rendered a decision to the effect that, by the constitution of the State, no public debt could be contracted by the Government of California exceeding the sum of three hundred thousand dollars, unless previously submitted to and ratified by a direct vote of the people. As none of the existing State debt has been submitted to the people, the whole amount, except three hundred thousand dollars, is virtually thus declared unconstitutional and invalid, and a fair opening is made for State repudiation. The decision, however, meets with no response, either among the people or from the press. A meeting of merchants and business men of San Francisco was held, at which resolutions were adopted declaring that the faith of the State was regarded as being involved in the just and true payment of her entire indebtedness, constitutional or unconstitutional.

Another Indian battle had taken place at Puget Sound, when twenty-seven savages were killed and the encampment of the party burned.

Walker still keeps at bay, though his discomfiture is now looked upon as almost certain. The President of Costa Rica has issued a proclamation addressed to Walker's adherents, in which he offers them, on condition of laying down their arms, a free passage to Greytown, and from thence to the city of New York.

At Peru the revolution has become general throughout the republic. General Vivanco, the leader of the revolutionary party, has succeeded in obtaining possession of nearly every port on the east, except Callao.

MEXICO.

THE revolution at San Luis Potosi has been completely suppressed.

SIR ROBERT PEEL AND "LE NORD."—During his residence in Russia (says "Le Nord"), Sir Robert gave proof of so much laughableness, arrogance, and ridiculous vanity, that he alone, among all the honourable members of the British embassy, was unable to attract the slightest mark of sympathy or esteem. That this circumstance should have awakened his anger, and that he should have expressed it in a macearoni speech, surprises no one.

JAPAN.—We have important intelligence from Japan. A grand convocation of the dignitaries of the empire has decided to permit no foreigner to visit the interior; therefore the efforts of the English, Russians, and Americans, to open trade with that country have proved of no avail. The Japanese simply supply our vessels with necessaries, and receive in payment only gold and silver. The Dutch, on the contrary, are in high favour, and enjoy a monopoly of foreign traffic. The Japanese are making rapid progress in naval knowledge, and they have appropriated two millions and a half of dollars for getting up a fleet of vessels of war, on the European plan, to be commanded by Dutch naval officers. Four of the vessels are to be screw steamers.

A MELBOURNE TRAGEDY.—The latest news from Melbourne records a terrible tragedy. It appears that Ensign Pennefather, of the 40th Regiment, had, in a fit of insanity, rushed from his room armed with a revolver; meeting Ensign Keith, he shot him through the cheek; shot Dr. McCauley, who was reading in the open air; fired at Ensign Lucas, wounding him severely in the jaw; and then blew out his own brains. The evidence at the inquest was conclusive as to Pennefather's insanity.

THE WAR IN CHINA.

AFFAIRS at Canton have undergone but slight alteration, it being apparently Sir Michael Seymour's policy to hold his present position until he receives from home replies to his despatches by last mail.

Since the affair with the Americans took place, Yeh has written to the American authorities to say that their flag shall be respected, and that it was entirely a mistake which led to the misunderstanding. There are yet one or two small points at issue, but it is understood that the Americans will accept the apology.

Blenheim Reach Fort was taken on the 26th of November by her Majesty's steamer *Barracouta*, without loss. The French Folly, which the Chinese had re-occupied, was attacked on the 4th inst., and carried with the loss of one man killed and two wounded on our side. The fort was immediately mined and blown up; Shamen Fort has also been entirely destroyed by gunpowder. Two magazines in the city have been blown up by our shells from the Dutch Folly, and several fires have broken out, causing considerable damage. The foreign factories have been burnt down by the Chinese. Vigorous efforts were made by the seamen and marines to stop the progress of the flames, but they were fruitless. The three banks, the Oriental, Agra, and Mercantile, were burnt, and Admiral Seymour had to withdraw his men into the gardens. Captain Cowper, R.E., was killed by the falling of a beam while he was engaged in pulling down the Chinese buildings in the neighbourhood of the factories. The rebels have lately gained some successes in the Canton province, which must embarrass the Imperialist cause very materially. The large town of Sing Yuen, situated on the river, about forty miles above Canton, has fallen into their hands, and numerous bands of bandits are ravaging the surrounding country, from which the troops have been withdrawn for concentration at Canton. In the river below Canton there is a large number of rebel or pirate boats, but Admiral Seymour has given them to understand that no interference will be permitted while he holds the river. Her Majesty's steamer *Sampson* has been cruising around Hongkong, and has destroyed a number of pirate boats which had assembled in those waters, levying black mail, and all but preventing supplies reaching the colony from the mainland.

We hear of one terrible consequence of the present condition of Canton, Yeh, it seems, has been concentrating there all the troops ordinarily distributed through the surrounding country, and some of the districts from which the garrisons have been withdrawn have been consequently overrun by thousands of Hak-kamen. Within the last three weeks, the magisterial districts of Sin-hwai, Sin-ning, K'ai-ping, and Hoi-shan have suffered fearfully. Some fifty towns and villages are said to have been sacked and burned; the inhabitants massacred without distinction of age or sex; and it is computed that some 50,000 have been turned out of house and home. Making due allowance for Chinese amplification, there appears to be little doubt of the main facts.

The Americans met with a fatal accident in completing the destruction of the Barrier Forts; one of the mines exploded through the carelessness of a seaman, killed him and two of his shipmates, and wounded six others. The *Portsmouth* and *Levant* had returned to Whampoa.

The Chinese murdered, in the village of Naupien, on December 5th, Charles Bennett, a private in the Royal Marines, of the *Sybilie*, whom they beheaded; and Richard Winter, A.B., of the *Comus*, whom they drowned.

THE EXECUTION OF VERGER.

THE appeal of Verger was rejected on Thursday week by the Court of Cassation, and his petition to the Emperor for a pardon or commutation shared the same fate. But little time was allowed to elapse between the final determination of the court and the last act of the tragedy which opened at St. Etienne-du-Mont. Orders were given the same night for the execution to take place on the following day, and at half-past eight o'clock on Friday morning (the 30th ult.) the criminal expiated his guilt on the scaffold.

The order of the Court for carrying out its sentence was received at the prison of La Roquette at midnight. The bearer was the executioner himself. Verger had passed the whole of the day in a state of feverish restlessness, his agitation increasing as the day wore on. He frequently asked questions about what was going on in the Court of Cassation, and manifested intense anxiety as to the result of his appeal. As night came on he began to entertain hopes of its success, since he learned nothing of the proceedings, and "no news is good news." At last, however, he began to entertain misgivings, but still clung tenaciously to the hope that his safety would come from the Emperor, and that the capital sentence would be commuted to perpetual banishment. He threw himself on his pallet, but for some time he found little repose. His agitation was extreme, and his slumbers feverish, till two o'clock, when he fell into a profound sleep, which was not broken by the noise made by the workmen in preparing the scaffold.

It lasted till half-past seven, when the Director of the prison, the Inspector-General, the Chief of Police, and the chaplain (Abbé Hugon), came to awaken him, and announce the terrible news that his last hour was approaching, and that he must prepare for death. It was the chaplain who undertook the office of informing him that his appeal had been rejected—that his petition to the Emperor was equally unsuccessful—that no further hope remained—and that all that was now left him was to prepare for death. The wretched man raised himself on his pallet, held his head down for some instants, and turned about bewildered, as if he had awoke from some terrible dream. When he comprehended that hope was no more, he cried, "Impossible, impossible!" The chaplain repeated that, unfortunately, it was too true, and that all was over. At once he became excited, and his excitement rose to fury. "I will not die!" he shouted. "It is impossible that my appeal and my pardon are both refused—impossible! I cling to life; my life is my own, and you have no right to take it from me!" The chaplain endeavoured to calm and console him, but in vain. He refused to listen to his prayers; but breaking out into violence, reviled the priest with language similar to that which he had used before the Court of Assizes.

The Director of the Prison at length interfered. Verger cried, "Give me out an hour—an hour—but one hour—no more. I must write—I must send an express to the Emperor!" The Director told him it was impossible. "Impossible! no, I will not die! I will not—I will defend myself to the last! You may murder me in this cell, but from it I will not stir!" At these words he threw himself again on his bed, clung to it, and resisted all attempts to lift him. The jailers had to be called in, and they were obliged to put on his clothes by main force. During this operation Verger made the greatest resistance, but, finding all his efforts vain, he all of a sudden relaxed, and fell into a state of prostration.

At a quarter to eight the executioner entered the cell to prepare him for the scaffold. Verger underwent this last operation without making a movement or uttering a word; he only shrank a little when the cold steel of the scissars cut the hair from the back of the head touched his neck. The chaplain again approached him, and with tears in his eyes and a tremulous voice once more exhorted him to think of his soul. He at first listened to the priest in silence, and then retired with him to a corner of the cell. He knelt, joined in prayer, and probably confessed, for the chaplain pronounced the absolution. Eight o'clock struck, and at the last stroke he issued from the cell, and proceeded to the scaffold. He appeared calmer, and almost resigned to his fate. Nevertheless, when bidding farewell to the Director of the Prison and his assistants, he once more implored for one hour "to write to the Emperor." At a few minutes after eight he issued from the prison gate, when at once the scaffold, in all its reality, met his eye. During the short passage he was supported by the chaplain on one side, and on the other by the Director of the Prison and the executioner. As he moved he was heard to utter the words, "Amende honorable—jamais! plus tard." He mounted the steps of the platform slowly, and on reaching it he appeared as if he wished to speak, but any words he uttered were heard distinctly. It was thought they were, "Vive Jésus! sauve la France! sauve l'Empereur!" He was again exhorted by the attendant priests. He knelt on the ground and once uttered some words—it is to be hoped of prayer. Then slowly rising, he cast a glance in the distance, took the crucifix in his hands and kissed it, gazed for an instant or two on the cold and clear sky above, flung himself into the arms of the Abbé Hugon, and then surrendered himself to the executioner. He was fastened to the plank, and his neck placed under the instrument of death. At the given signal it fell, flashing in the cold light of the morning, and all was over.

ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF A NEAPOLITAN ARCHBISHOP.

THE news of the execution of Verger for the assassination of the Archbishop of Paris was immediately followed by the intelligence that the life of Gaetano Rossini, Archbishop of Acerenza and Matera had been attempted by a priest. The prelate, in his full pontifical robes, was kneeling on the steps of the altar, before the Host, when a priest, advancing stealthily from behind the altar, struck him with a dagger. One of the canons near the prelate pushed the arm of the assassin and broke the force of the blow. The pointed hung in the Archbishop's robes, and wounded him but very slightly. He at once took to flight, and then the priest drawing a pistol from under his garments, shot the canon dead. No reason for this sacrilegious murder is yet known. The Archbishop of Matera was appointed to the see in 1855. Matera is a town of about 11,000 inhabitants, and possesses a college and other ecclesiastical institutions.

SIR JOHN McNEILL AND COLONEL TULLOCH.

At the close of the past year, some of the most influential members of the commercial community of Liverpool drew up an address, expressing their high approval, and that of the numerous persons who signed it, of the report of Sir John McNeill and Colonel Tulloch with respect to the Crimean disasters. Sir John has replied at considerable length to this document, the value of which, he observes, "is enhanced by its being the only public document I possess which contains an acknowledgment that any service whatever was rendered by the commission." Believing that the Government which employed that commission has failed duly to acknowledge its services, and that public interests are endangered by the course which has been pursued in regard to it, you have protested against that course, and have expressed your own views of the benefits which the country has derived from our exertions." He proceeds—"What objects, with reference to us and to our report, may have been contemplated by her Majesty's Ministers in the course which they thought it proper to pursue (in causing the inquiry at Chelsea). I do not pretend to know or to understand; but whatever their intentions may have been, their proceedings appear to have produced a very general impression that the acknowledged fidelity of our report was not in accordance with their wishes; and the feeling thus produced must affect the disposition of the country to entrust to the executive any inquiries connected with the army that may hereafter be called for." Sir John then points out that, notwithstanding this proceeding, Lord Palmerston and Lord Panmure had publicly avowed their entire approval of the report sent in by himself and Colonel Tulloch. The proceeding of the Chelsea board he thinks were "not calculated to impress the people of this country with profound admiration of the taste, the feeling, or the spirit in which they were carried on." He asserts that his own and Colonel Tulloch's reports were framed with the strictest regard to candour, adding—"I do not believe there is a single passage in our reports that can justly be regarded as implying or insinuating the slightest shadow of an imputation on the motives of any man. The officers who complained of that report have mostly been less scrupulous; but the whole matter is now before the public—the tribunal of ultimate resort in all such cases—and I leave it with entire confidence in their hands." Ridiculing the assertion that it was impossible to avert the distress experienced by the army, notwithstanding the unusual facilities possessed for transmitting stores, Sir John concludes—"This is a proposition upon which you, gentlemen, are perhaps better qualified than any other body of men to pronounce an opinion; and you have now repelled the impeachment of your intelligence and knowledge implied in so extravagant a demand on your credulity."

Colonel Tulloch's reply is shorter, but no less warm in its expressions of gratitude. He remarks—"Having stated in a volume just issuing from the press, and of which I transmit a copy, my objections to that (the Chelsea) board, even though professional reasons induced me to appear before it, it is unnecessary for me to make any further comments on that head."

OBITUARY.

THORN, SIR N.—On the 28th ult., at Upcott House, near Taunton, from a sudden attack, died Lieutenant-General Sir Nathaniel Thorn, K.C.B., and Colonel of the 3rd Buffs. He entered the army as an ensign in October, 1802, and had served with distinction in the Peninsula. He was gazetted a K.C.B. only on the 3rd ult., and had been invested with the insignia of the Order of the Bath by her Majesty at Windsor, on the Saturday preceding his death. An inquest was held on the body the day following, when a verdict was returned to the effect that the Gallant General had died by the visitation of God. He was about 70 years of age, and has left a widow surviving.

DOWNE, VISCOUNT.—On the 26th ult. at Torquay, aged 44, died the Right Hon. William Henry Downe, seventh Viscount Downe. His Lordship was the eldest son of the sixth Viscount, who was in holy orders, by Lydia, only daughter of the late John Heathcote, Esq., of Conington Castle, and succeeded to the title in 1846. He represented the County of Rutland in the Conservative interest in the Parliament of 1841. He married in 1843, Mary Isabel, daughter of the late Honourable and Reverend Dr. Bagot, Bishop successively of Oxford and of Bath and Wells, by whom he has left a numerous youthful family.

ORGANISATION OF THE WAR-OFFICE.—The arrangements connected with the organisation of the War-office are now completed, and the offices of Clerk of the Ordnance, Deputy-Secretary-at-War, and Director General of Army Clothing have been abolished. Colonel Mundy has been appointed Governor of Jersey, and Sir Benjamin Hawes, the late Deputy-Secretary-at-War, becomes the permanent Under-Secretary of State; Mr. Godley, the late Director-General of Stores, is appointed Assistant Under-Secretary of State; Sir Henry Storks, K.C.B., is appointed Secretary for Military Correspondence; Captain Calfin, at present Naval Director-General of Artillery, is appointed Director of Stores and Clothing, and the salary attached to the former office is saved to the public. Mr. Ramsay, who has hitherto been Assistant-Director-General of Clothing, will be Assistant-Director of Stores and Clothing, and will, in consequence of the amalgamation, undertake other duties connected with army stores generally in addition to those hitherto performed by him. Sir Thomas Troubridge is appointed Deputy-Adjutant-General, and will, under the directions of his Royal Highness the General Commanding-in-Chief, perform the multifarious duties connected with the arrangement for the patterns of clothing, accoutrements, and necessities supplied to the troops, and those purely military duties formerly undertaken by the Board of General Officers.

SUDDEN DEATH OF THE SECRETARY OF THE REFORM CLUB.—Mr. William King Norway, who has for some years held the office of secretary of that institution, some time since broke one of his legs, and from that time had been in the habit of taking laudanum to allay the pain, which sometimes was very severe. On Friday week, he suffered acutely in consequence of the cold, and took more than his usual dose, a circumstance which unhappily resulted in his death. A coroner's jury returned a verdict of "Accidental poisoning."

MRS. HADIN, widow of the author of the "Dictionary of Dates," and whose distresses have been made a reproach to the Literary Fund, has acknowledged that during the last six years of her husband's life he received from the fund various sums amounting to £200; and that she herself has since received £25 from that most useful charity.

IRELAND.

RESISTANCE TO THE LAW.—On Friday week, the Sub-Sheriff for the County of Tipperary, proceeded with his bailiffs and a constabulary party to the lands of Kilpatrick, about four miles from Tipperary, to execute a writ of fieri facias, at the suit of the official manager of the Tipperary Bank estate, against the goods of Mrs. Catherine Marnane, who held, as executrix of her husband, nine shares in this unfortunate concern, and who b-side was a depositor to a considerable amount. The only stock on the land was nine cows, which were taken, but the violence of the people congregated to resist the execution completely prevented the Sheriff from keeping possession. The police were obliged to use their bayonets, but to no purpose. In the melee the constabulary suffered to a great extent, and in their efforts to keep back the mob three of their bayonets were smashed. In the evening of the same day five of the rioting party were arrested, and committed for trial at the ensuing assizes of Clonmel.

FIRST LEVEE OF THE SEASON.—The Lord-Lieutenant held his first levee for the season at Dublin Castle on Wednesday week. It was very fully attended—between 1,300 and 1,400 persons were present. The clergy of the Established Church ministered in great force, but of the Roman Catholic not a single bishop or other dignitary attended to do honour to the representative of Royalty.

IMPROVED CONDITION OF IRELAND.—An important movement, indicative in a remarkable manner of the altered state of this country, has just been set on foot in Dublin, the object being to reduce the present poor-law expenditure of Ireland by the amalgamation of several poor-law unions. A meeting of delegates from the several Irish boards of guardians for the purpose of taking steps to bring the matter under the consideration of Government. About two hundred delegates assembled on the occasion. Some very interesting statistics were elicited in the course of the proceedings. Among other facts, it was stated that there are five of the Irish union workhouses in any one of which there are not fifty paupers; that there are twenty-four unions no one of which has 150 paupers; twenty-four more in which the number is under 200 each, and fifteen in none of which do the paupers number 100. The absurdity of keeping up the present expensive establishments in the several unions under such circumstances was easily shown, and a memorial embracing the principal facts having been agreed to, a deputation to wait with it on the Lord-Lieutenant was appointed.

SCOTLAND.

MURDER OF A GAMEKEEPER.—A few evenings ago David Alston, game-watcher to the Lochmaben Association for the Suppression of Poaching and other Offences, was drinking at the Commercial Inn, and, whilst doing so, several poachers who were also there used threatening language to him. Alston afterwards left for home, but returned to the inn again, with his mouth bleeding, and said he had been ill-used by some of the poachers. The landlord volunteered to see him part of the way home, leaving him when Alston thought the danger was over. On returning, the landlord met three of the men who had threatened Alston. Next morning the body of Alston was found lying dead in the street of Lochmaben; he had evidently been beaten to death. Several men have been apprehended on suspicion.

A "PIOUS" SWINDLER.—Information was lodged with the Glasgow police authorities last week, that a middle-aged dark-complexioned, sunburnt-looking man, about thirty-five years of age, was going about the city representing that he was connected with the London Missionary Society, and had recently returned from Ceylon and Calcutta, where he had been employed as a missionary. By plausible, and what has since proved false representations, he had already succeeded in fleecing several persons of sums of money varying from £1 to £5.

THE PROVINCES.

REFORM DEMONSTRATION AT MANCHESTER.—The "Free-traders and Friends of Political Progress" at Manchester held their annual meeting in the Free-trade Hall last week. Mr. George Wilson took the chair as usual. He read a letter from Mr. Bright, written at Rochdale three months ago, suggesting to the consideration of his leading constituents, whether, as his health would not permit him to be present in Parliament in the coming session, he should resign at once, or whether he should retain his seat until the dissolution of Parliament: he anticipates that a few months more of rest will restore his health. The meeting passed a resolution to the effect that Mr. Bright should "allow the continuance of his Parliamentary connection" with Manchester, "in the earnest hope that the cause of popular rights, of social progress, and of international concord, may soon regain the assistance of his disinterested and distinguished advocacy in the House of Commons." Mr. Gibson, the other Member, made a speech in favour of peace, retrenchment, and direct taxation. A resolution was adopted requiring a reduction of taxation and comprehensive measures of Parliamentary reform.

INCENDIARISM.—On Friday week the entrance gates to the chase leading to the residence of Mr. Charles Grant, at Mill Green, Ingatstone, were taken off their hinges—the one being thrown on the ground, and the other into an adjacent pond. The dog (a very savage one) was found to be poisoned. These were only preliminary outrages, for on Sunday night, about ten o'clock, a large quantity of straw was heaped in the portion of the house, and set on fire. Fortunately it was extinguished in time to prevent much mischief.

FOG GUN AT HOLYHEAD.—A notice, emanating from the Trinity Board, is posted in the Liverpool Exchange news-rooms, to the effect that the Admiralty, Board of Trade, and Liverpool Corporation had placed a gun of large calibre on Holyhead mountain, to be fired during foggy weather. The gun will be fired every half-hour (Greenwich time), and every quarter of an hour after 5.30 p.m. till the arrival of the Dublin mail boat, and every quarter of an hour after 11.30 p.m. till the arrival of the midnight boat.

MR. FREDERICK PEEL AND THE INCOME-TAX.—Mr. Frederick Peel attended an Anti-Income-tax meeting of his constituents, at Bury, last week. Resolutions favouring the reduction of the tax to the original severance, and condemning the principle and operation of the impost, having been passed, Mr. Peel addressed the meeting. His speech was merely an amplification of the reply of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to a recent deputation in London, as reported in our last number.

BARBAROUS TREATMENT OF A WIFE.—At an inquest concluded last week, at Clowin, in Derbyshire, on the body of a woman named Seaton, her husband, a quarryman, was committed for trial for manslaughter. George Seaton and four young men who worked in the same stone quarry, were drinking together at several public-houses on the previous Saturday evening. They were joined by Seaton's wife, who partook of a quantity of liquor, and became intoxicated. The woman could not walk home, and her husband and the other men, who were all drunk, dragged her home along the muddy road. The husband finally threw her in a ditch, and there she died.

BURNING OF WALLASEY CHURCH.—On Sunday morning the old parish church at Wallasey, near Birkenhead, was discovered to be in flames. A messenger was sent to Birkenhead for the Fire Brigade, which was in attendance about an hour afterwards. There was, however, little or no water, and the fire raged on unchecked. In about an hour the roof fell in with a tremendous crash, and the flames speedily ran over the entire building. The church is completely gutted, the only portion remaining comparatively untouched being the tower. The internal fittings—pulpit, pews, and an organ—were destroyed, and the place is a perfect ruin. The fire is believed to have been occasioned by the overheating of the flues.

CONVICT OUTRAGE AT PORTSMOUTH.—While one of the convicts in a gang, watched over by a warder named Aston, was being searched on Monday morning, the latter received a stab in the neck from a large clasp-knife, the blade penetrated to the hilt, and went close to the jugular vein. Aston lies in a very dangerous state. How the convict came possessed of the knife remains at present a mystery. This is the fourth attempt on the lives of the convict keepers of the Portsmouth establishment during a year. The first was a fatal one—that of the unfortunate Assistant Surgeon of the Stirling Castle. The prisoner in the present case was sentenced to transportation for life, for stabbing a convict keeper at Bermuda, while himself under sentence there. These ruffians know that their warders are not allowed to be armed with any defensive weapon worthy of the name, and calculate their chances accordingly.

ROBBERIES AT PLYMOUTH.—Within the last fortnight Plymouth and its vicinity have been prey to burglars. On the night of the 22nd of January the premises of Mr. Latimer, editor of the "Plymouth Journal," were forcibly entered, the iron chest and cash-box carried into the cellar and broken open, and the offices ransacked, without effect, the money having been removed the previous evening. On the 24th, Mr. Bowden, butcher, was knocked off his horse just outside the town, and robbed of four sovereigns and a gold watch; £200 in notes in an inner pocket escaped observation. On the 26th the residence of Mr. Oram at Stoke was entered through an unoccupied house adjoining, and robbed of some trifling articles of plate. On the 27th similar robberies were effected from the premises of Mr. Gloyd, dairyman, York Street, Plymouth; Mr. Husband, Stoke; and Mr. Bennett, Milhouse. On Friday week plate valued at £50 was taken from Pounds, the seat of Mr. Hodge. Several unsuccessful attempts have also been made. In one case, between eight and nine o'clock, Mr. Cooper, Quartermaster, Royal Marines, encountered a fellow in his garden, and drove him out. In another, the burglars effected a quiet entrance through the rear into the front shop of Mr. Moysey, saddler, George Street, Plymouth, for the purpose of piercing his wall to get into the valuable store of Mr. Shepherd, jeweller, but finding the masonry too compact, decamped as they entered, unobserved. On Thursday week a thief entered the attic window of a house of South Devon Place, and on being chased over the leads dropped from a parapet into a garden and escaped. During the same period cases of stealing from the person have greatly increased, one lady having lost £30 in bank notes. These audacious acts have created considerable alarm, which has been not a little increased by the knowledge that early on Wednesday morning two of a batch of fifty convicts brought by rail from the eastward, for transmission to the Dartmoor prisons, escaped from the station, and have not been re-captured, although they passed through the town in their prison dresses, handcuffed together.

BURGLARY AT CHEQUER'S COURT.—On Monday night a burglary was committed at the mansion of Lady Frankland Russell, Chequer's Court, Bucks. The thieves, who were evidently no strangers to the premises, obtained entrance into the house by breaking a pane of glass in a window in the north front, which they opened. They then proceeded systematically and quietly in their work of depredation, entering the various rooms by means of the keys, and cutting the paintings from the frames. After they had secured all that they considered worthy of their attention, they hung up the keys in their accustomed place, and made their egress by the front door. Among the paintings stolen are said to be the famous portrait of Oliver Cromwell and many others pertaining to the period of the First Charles and Commonwealth.

EXPLOSION AT THE TREDEGAR COMPANY'S IRON-WORKS.—These extensive works have been the scene of an alarming explosion, by which loss is incurred to the extent of about £5,000. The cause of the explosion was a temporary stoppage of the engines connected with the hot blast for the furnaces. The explosion was tremendous, completely shattering the surrounding buildings. One boy was nearly suffocated, and it is marvellous that no worse accident happened.

HIGHWAY ROBBERY AND ATTEMPTED MURDER.—An atrocious attack has been made by four highwaymen on the person of Mr. Dymock, surgeon, of Kingswood, Gloucestershire, and his wife, who are so severely injured that they are considered in great danger. On Sunday night, about seven o'clock, Mr. and Mrs. Dymock were driving past a place called Gammony Hill, about three miles from Bath, when four men suddenly rushed upon them, one seizing the horse's head, the other three commencing a most violent attack on Mr. and Mrs. Dymock with loaded bludgeons. They then dragged them out of the gig, and notwithstanding their prayers for mercy, repeated the assault. Two of the ruffians plundered the vehicle and the persons of their victims, from whom they took a sum of money in gold and silver, two gold watches, and some jewellery, altogether worth £100. Alarmed by the sound of an approaching vehicle they decamped, and got clear away.

A STRANGE DELUSION.—A remarkable case of mental hallucination recently occurred in Bury St. Edmunds. A poor woman, the wife of a shepherd, fancied that it had been revealed to her from Heaven that she was neither to eat nor drink anything until she had another revelation commanding her to do so. Her husband and friends did all they could to remove the delusion, but in vain; and, at length, after she had remained six days without food, it was thought advisable to remove her to the workhouse. Here every attention was paid to her, but she resolutely adhered to her self-imposed abstinence from the 15th ult. to Sunday, the 25th, when, as her health was evidently fast failing, some strong beef-tea and port wine were administered by the stomach pump. She appeared still unshaken in her belief, when she was visited by the Rev. C. Elvin. After praying with her, he inquired if she could repeat the Lord's Prayer, which she did, and then he reminded her that if she was to ask for her daily bread it was of course in order that she might eat it. No sooner was this suggestion made than her countenance brightened up. She at once consented to eat, and some food being brought, she made a moderate meal, and so continued to take nourishment at intervals. She will probably have recovered by this time from the effects of her long abstinence.

A NEW "DODGE."—A rogue has put a new "dodge" in operation at Manchester: orders for goods were sent, with half-notes enclosed; the goods were forwarded, but the other halves of the notes came not—they had been sent elsewhere with another order: thus £60 worth of goods were got for £30 in notes. The duped parties met, compared the halves, and divided the sum equally.

COCK-FIGHTING IS NOT ALTOGETHER EXTINCT. A "grand" exhibition of this brutal sport took place at a public-house at Cambridge, when several of the poor creatures were killed.

DUDDINGSTONE LOCH DURING A FROST.

A CORRESPONDENT has sent us the following notes *apropos* of the engraving which appeared in our last week's number of the scene at Duddingstone Loch, on a Saturday afternoon, when the frost is severe, the ice strong, and when skaters and curlers abound.

"It is my belief," he observes, "that nothing extracts so genial a warmth from the breast of a Scotchman as a thorough frost. Good heavens! when I—a sojourner in the Land of 'Cakes'—reflect on the stupendous propriety of the 'Auld Reekies' in the abstract, and the invincible respectability of the Kirk, I declare I am lost in wonder at the recollection of a Saturday afternoon at Duddingstone Loch, when the ice is good, and the sky fair. This beautiful lake spreads over many acres, overshadowed to the north by the huge green back of famed Arthur's Seat, and the charming little church of Duddingstone, while to the south stretch out fine slopes of field and pasture, rising gradually to the bold horizon, on which Craigmillier Castle and Libberton Church form so picturesque an outline.

"It is here that during severe frosts the inhabitants of Edinburgh are accustomed to thaw. As the propitious Saturday—when offices and shops close early—draws near, great is the excitement of the population, and many the anxious watch kept on Friday night by youth and maiden, lest any symptom of 'freshness' should develop itself. The vigil having been duly spent in intense anxiety on this point, behold how 'brightly breaks the morn' which ushers in a day of genuine good-natured fun. The 'Curlers,' organised into as many societies as there are cricket clubs in England, are the 'keenest' to commence proceedings; the news that the South has challenged the North, or that Dalkith is bent on snatching the laurels won by Lasswade, or that Cockpen defies both, flies like the electric spark over the whole face of the country. I have known south country farmers start at a moment's notice and no end of inconvenience, at even the rumour of some far distant water probably bearing next morning, and travel all night, in order to encounter some champion of another 'country-side' in the national game; and, indeed, the enthusiasm in every village throughout the country is universal. I like this sort of thing very much; it is positively refreshing to see men who seem all the year round bent on being respectable and solemn, turn out on a sudden, and with the gusto of raw boys set-to at a game, and jump, and dance, and shout with pleasure; and I have seen gentlemen, and farmers and even labourers, all playing together in the most delightfully social manner, encouraging each other by their Christian names, or by the universal 'mania' to do deeds of prowess.

"I cannot boast a perfect knowledge of the game, but as it is probable many of your readers have never seen it played, I may as well describe what appears to me to be its *rationale*. The players are divided into two parties; and each man possesses two heavy rounded stones, flat and smooth on the under surface, and provided with a handle above. A long, broad path is swept through the snow or frost on the ice, at either end of which is placed a small mark, and to aim the stones from the one extremity so that they will stop in close proximity to this point at the other, seems to me to be the great object of the game. Each player is equipped with a species of broom; and when a champion has launched a stone on its slow, steady course along the black, polished ice, the opposition, perhaps, conceive that the player has given it too strong an impetus, and thereupon they will fall to flogging the ice immediately before the revolving weight, and, by the additional polish thus given to the surface, endeavour to lead it past the goal. Should, however, the impetus given not be sufficient, then the player's own party try to entice on the stone to its desired position—and either of their operations are accompanied by the most frantic yells of 'Soup, Soup!' Indeed it was this outcry that first attracted my attention to the game, one very cold day, and I was not a little disappointed to find it only meant *sweep ahead*. Of course the initiated see all sorts of beauties in the game, and praise the science of this, that, and the other stroke. The shades forbid that I should blame a taste which calls forth enthusiasm, but I must say that my sympathies are with the shinty players, who, albeit the terror of old gentlemen and unprotected females, exhibit as honest an intensity in their fun as the curlers do, while they keep themselves warm with bodily exercise as well as inward enthusiasm, and dash about like comets in ethereal space. For those who do not skate, curl or play shinty, what is there more delightful than the long, crowded slide? I do not mean to figure upon one personally, for I am of a timid disposition, and think that the great pleasure of a slide is to watch the perpetual succession of happy faces shooting past, boys of all ages and sorts, big men with broad grins on their red faces; occasionally girls, gallantly supported on either side by officious cavaliers, and uttering little screams, particularly when the agility of the said cavaliers begins to show symptoms of flagging; and then how very satisfactory it is when the little boy who is sliding first falls and brings the whole flight to decided and immediate grief! It is at this moment that your correspondent 'pronounces' himself. He rushes into the thick of the struggle; he mauls the smaller boys; he scatters the noisy ones; he rescues the young ladies from the chaos; he assists them to regain their feet; he trusts they are not hurt; he receives their abashed thanks; he raises his hat with an elegance all his own, and retires from that part of the field covered with blushes and bearing the belief in his bosom that he has rather distinguished himself."

DISASTERS AT SEA.

THE LOSS OF THE TYNE.—The commissioners appointed to inquire into the loss of the steam-ship Tyne have published their report. They say:—"After a most careful and anxious investigation, we cannot arrive at any other opinion than that the ship was lost by the wrongful act and default of Captain Valier, in consequence of the lead not being constantly hove on approaching the land and in accordance with the company's instructions, and the captain not making due allowance for the wind and strong ebb tide that was running from the time he passed Portland, and the total absence of those precautions necessary to insure the safety of a large ship within so short a distance of the land." The Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade having considered the report, determined to suspend Captain Valier's certificate for a period of twelve months.

FORTUNATE ESCAPE OF A FRENCH FISHING VESSEL.—As the Imperial mail steam-ship Alliance was nearing Calais about six p.m., of the 22nd ult., she came suddenly upon a French fishing boat, which, although a strict lookout had been kept, was not seen until the last moment. Collision was inevitable, and if the Trinity House regulations had been complied with the fishing boat and her thirteen or fourteen hands would most likely have perished. Happily, however, the commander of the steam-ship, with great humanity and presence of mind, steered his vessel so as to receive the blow himself, and instead of running down the boat, the whole force of the collision was expended on the paddle-wheel of the steamer, which totally disabled the whole machinery of the wheel. The fishing-boat pursued her way, and the steamer went into Calais, from which place she was about a mile distant. Proceedings were subsequently taken against the fishing-boat; but the matter was settled by consent on the part of the latter to pay between 400*l.* and 500*l.* damages.

SHIPWRECK.—AFFECTING LOSS OF LIFE.—Some time since the sloop Elizabeth left Lowestoft, with grain. The captain had on board his wife and four children. A gale came on, and the captain, fearing the vessel would be lost, placed his wife and one child in the boat; he was handing another in, when a wave washed the boat away. Another sea brought them together again, and he was handing his wife and child out of the boat, when they were overwhelmed by a sea and disappeared. He then lashed his remaining three children to the mast. Eventually the vessel got ashore, and the captain, his children, and crew, were rescued, nearly dead.

HUMANITY AT SEA.—The French sloop L'Honorine, Captain Letoy, left Ramsgate on the 26th of January, with fifty-two tons of iron, for St. Malo, and when twenty miles south of the Isle of Wight, from some unknown cause, went down in so sudden a manner, that her crew, four in all, had barely time to get into the punt before she disappeared under them. This occurred at about four o'clock in the afternoon, when the wind was blowing very strong, and the sea running high. At two o'clock the next morning, a brig passed close to them, apparently without noticing their signals of distress. However, at eight o'clock, they saw her again three miles off coming towards them, and at half-past nine they were alongside, but by this time they had become so benumbed with cold and hunger that they had not strength to get on board, and were hoisted in by ropes. The brig was the Amelie, from Dieppe, and of New Port. Mr. Jenkins, her master, had observed the distressed boat at first, but, having failed in his efforts to discover her again, determined most humanely to remain near. Captain Jenkins already possesses a gold medal presented by the French Government for saving several lives on the French coast.

THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF THE GOLD PRODUCE for 1856 is estimated at one hundred and twenty tons. The markets for imports, generally speaking, had much improved at the date of the last advices from Melbourne.

FUNERAL SERVICE IN HONOUR OF PAUL DELAROCHE.

LIFE is short, art lives for ever. Social revolutions fail to disturb its progress; it thrives in civil war, keeps its equable path through all influences, and only falters when a nation grows so rich, and, above all, so "highly respectable," as this nation of Great Britain in 1857. We, indeed, buy pictures enough, and our artists are more munificently paid than any others in the world; moreover, we even go so far as to hang up our purchases; but as for anything like enthusiasm for art or artists, as a general characteristic, it is not known within these British seas. Does an artist paint a picture for us, we ask him for "the account," pay the money like respectable men, and with that the affair closes. Does the artist die, he gets himself buried; and if he happens to have left us some hundred of the choicest works that ever came from a painter's hands, we do indeed accept them, but by no means feel bound to fulfil the condition which the painter too well foresaw was necessary—the provision of four walls on which to hang his treasured works.

How different is the feeling and practice abroad, we have a late instance of from Florence. In Florence, at this moment, people have something to think of beside paintings, and the bones of a dead painter; but they somehow find time and thought to express their love of the one, and the respect which is due to the other. "The death of a man of genius," says the poet, "was always a sorrow for Florence;" and so it proved when Paul Delarocche died. It was an event not to be passed over with a few expressions of regret, uttered with as much earnestness as the customary "How d'ye do?" which no Englishman dreams of answering, or expects a reply to. In Florence, the church of Santa Croce was crowded on a certain day, not by artists only, but also by "the people," and a funeral service was solemnly performed in honour of the dead artist. Fancy such a thing occurring in any church in London, for any artist in the universe, native or foreign!

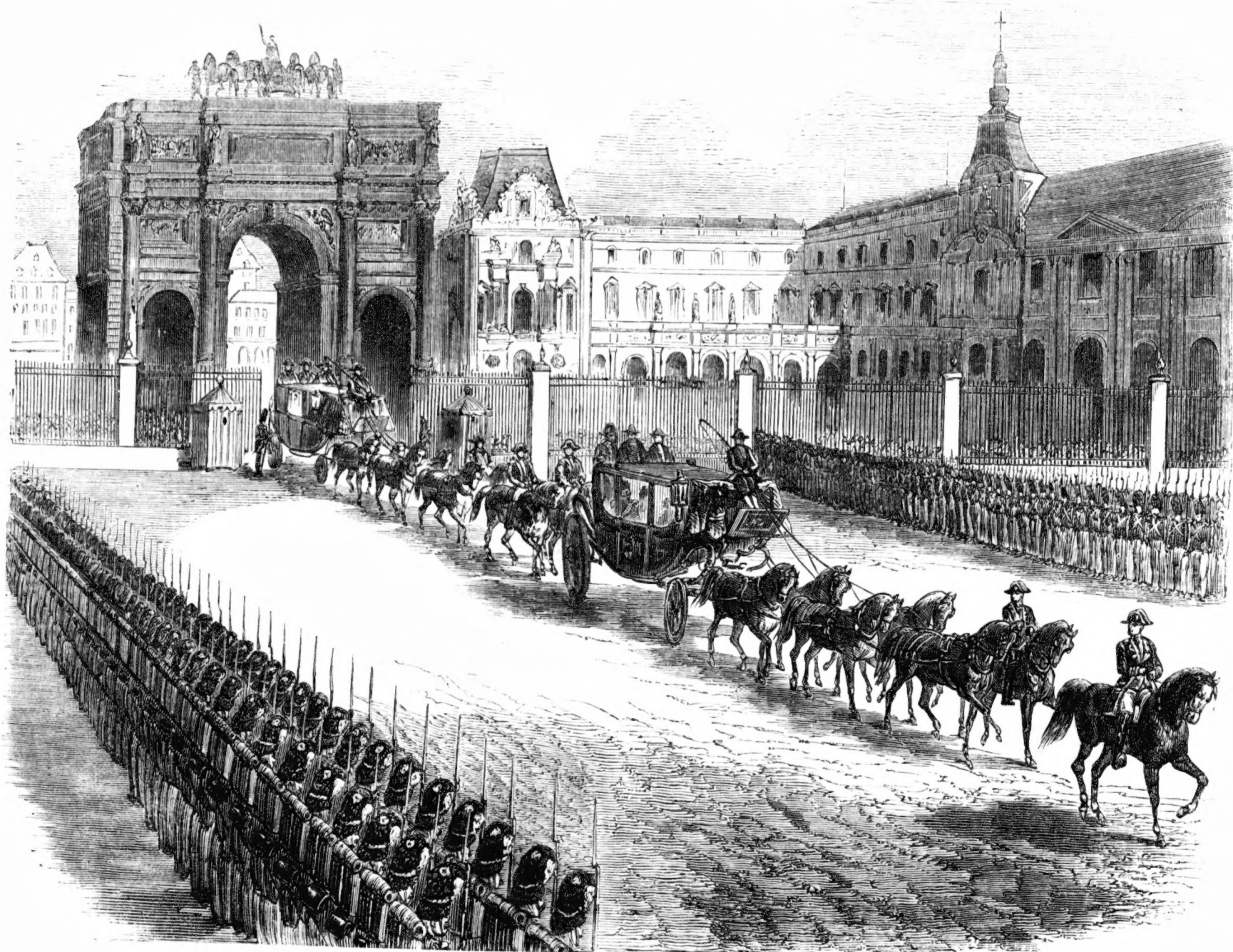


FUNERAL SERVICE IN HONOUR OF PAUL DELAROCHE, IN THE CHURCH OF SANTA-CROCE, FLORENCE.

THE PERSIAN AMBASSADOR AT PARIS.

Our relations with France on the one hand, and with Persia on the other, render the presence of Ferukh Khan at Paris, almost as interesting an event to us as to the Parisians. The Emperor is our ally; the Shah is our enemy. Then, as the subject of Herat and Mrs. Hashem can scarcely be avoided, even if they are not closely implicated in Ferukh Khan's chief instructions, will the Ambassador persuade the Emperor, or the Franco-Corsican the Persian? That the sole cause of rupture between the Courts of Great Britain and Persia was an intrigue between an English Plenipotentiary and a lady, Napoleon III. will hardly believe; or that Persia would venture on the occupation of Herat of her own counsels, and confiding in her own strength alone. Therefore, while the Emperor, foreseeing the probability, should the war continue, of England's laying her master-hand on Persian territory, and knowing that the case presents no excuse for "friendly interposition" in the Shah's behalf, will probably counsel his ambassador to submit in time. However, we ought to write in the past tense, and say that the French Emperor has already delivered this wise saying. For did he not say, in reply to the Persian Ambassador's address—"It is with pain that I have learned that war has broken out between you and one of my most intimate allies; but I entertain sincere wishes that your mission in this part of the world may hasten the return of a durable peace." Not that it is to be expected that the English Government will fail to make due use of the opportunity afforded by the Shah's contumacious conduct with respect to Herat. Persia has been played at us by Russia too long and too successfully to render the continuation of the game desirable for us; and we venture only a little step into the realms of vaticination in saying, that henceforward it is stopped. The war is against Persia, but also against Russian influence in Persia.

But Ferukh Khan is our subject, and not the war; for having given last week a picture representing the entrance of a French envoy into Teheran, it is only proper to complete the pictorial illustration of a diplomatic fact by calling in the aid of the graver to represent the



THE ARRIVAL OF THE PERSIAN AMBASSADOR AT THE PALACE OF THE TUILERIES.

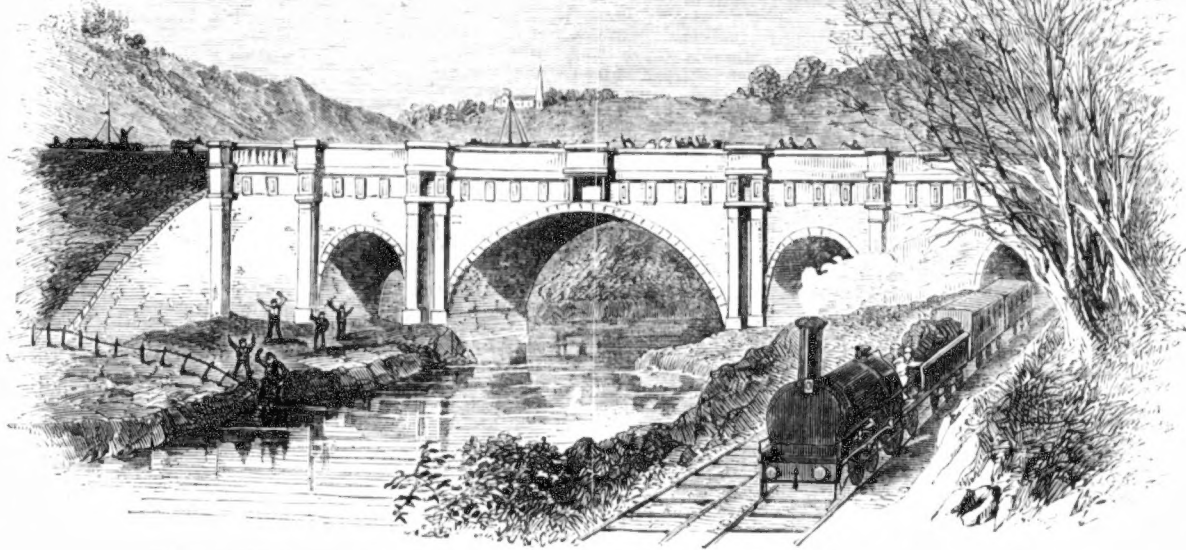
reception of Ferukh Khan at the Tuileries.

The Ambassador arrived at Paris on Sunday, the 24th ult. He was received at the Lyons Railway station by an interpreter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who accompanied his Excellency to Paris, though the time of official reception was not yet come. Ferukh Khan was attended by a large staff brilliant mirzas, shining khans, whose names here follow:—Mirza Zeman Khan, First Councillor; Mirza Malcom, Second Councillor; Mirza Riza, First Dragoman; Mohammed Ali Aga, Second Dragoman; Marimakh Khan, First Secretary; Mirza Ali Meini, Second Secretary; Mirza Ebd Eassem Khan, First Writer; Mirza Hussein, Second Writer; Mirza Riza, Doctor of Medicine; and Foquetti, Professor of Pharmacy of the College of Teheran. Ferukh Khan also brought with him twenty servants and six magnificent black horses, which together afforded an interesting spectacle to the groups of people who stood near the door of the hotel prepared for the reception of the Ambassador and his suite. On the evening of their arrival, however, Ferukh Khan, accompanied by the mirzas, and others the leading members of his staff, went in several carriages to the Turk's Embassy, where they supped, and were afterwards conducted to the house No. 46, Avenue Montagne, which had been taken for them.

The reception of his Excellency was delayed by the indisposition of the Imperial Prince—an indisposition which we have grave reasons for suspecting arose from the process (unhappily indispensable—to princes especially) of dentition. On Saturday week, however, the little Imperial jaws having become somewhat soothed, the Ambassador of Persia was solemnly received. Ferukh Khan and his suite were conducted to the palace of the Tuileries in three court carriages. The *cortège* approached the palace of the Tuileries by the Place du Carrousel, and on passing under the triumphal arch, was received by a regiment of Grenadiers of the Guard. An autograph letter from the Shah was delivered into the Emperor's hands. What further passed at the interview is already recorded in the "Illustrated Times" (see the last number); and we have only to add that, having been very graciously received, the Ambassador and his suite very gracefully withdrew. His Excellency wore a magnificent cashmere gown, trimmed with fur, and ornamented with diamond clasps, white kerseymere pantaloons with gold stripes, and the Astrakan cap. Two of his suite (cousins of the Shah, we believe) wore the same costume. The rest were in military uniform.

The Ambassador has made a great sensation in Parisian society. He is handsome and graceful in person; about forty years of age: he wears a coal-black beard, and a lovely little silken moustache; his eyes are large, black, and lustrous; besides the long robes, and the rich furs, he wears a romantic dagger in his girdle—a dagger adorned with an opal of immense value, the gift of a former Shah of Persia to one of Ferukh Khan's ancestors, in return for the two front teeth of Auli the Tiger, a famous rebel. Then his Excellency's hands are described as beautiful, as all oriental hands are; but above all, he has carried to Paris with him a good store of jewels, for other uses than the adornment of his person, and cashmere shawls more coveted even than jewels.

Among the presents which he brought for the Emperor and Empress were some magnificent pearls from the Persian Gulf, and some of the famous otto of roses, called in Persia *Zenna*. The Persian ladies use this precious perfume to give a roseate tint to their nails and eyebrows; and henceforth, why should not the Parisian ladies also be thus adorned?



THE CLAVERTON AQUEDUCT, NEAR BATH, ON THE LINE OF THE WILTS AND SOMERSET RAILWAY.

The house in the Avenue Montaigne, where Ferukh Khan lives, is not very large, and people wonder where room can be found to stow away all his suite. The fact is, that Persians, even of high rank, do not require so much furniture or so much house room as Europeans do. A good carpet and a few square feet of flooring is all they need. Many of the attaches of the Embassy have no beds, but sleep upon a simple cushion. As for the servants, they despise chairs, sit upon the floor, tailor-fashion, to take their meals, and afterwards sleep there, wrapped up in their cloaks.

WILTS, SOMERSET, AND WEYMOUTH RAILWAY.

AN aqueduct on the Wilts and Somerset Railway, a line which has recently been opened to the public, and which connects the watering-place of Weymouth with the ancient and fashionable city of Bath, forms the subject of the accompanying engraving. As Weymouth has thus the advantage of being admitted into the railway system of England, the opening was an event of novelty, and, of course, excited considerable interest. Considering the position and circumstances of the town, this railway can hardly fail to contribute to the prosperity of the inhabitants.

Together with Melcombe Regis, Weymouth ranks as a municipal and parliamentary borough of Dorsetshire, and is situated on the shores of a bay, formed by a deep semicircular bend of the sea, called Portland Roads. It appears that Weymouth is a place of great antiquity, and existed at the period when the Anglo-Saxon race gave kings and nobles to Britain. In the fourteenth century it was a place of considerable importance in a commercial point of view. Indeed, the admirable situation of Weymouth and its bay at an earlier period marked out the place as destined to be the scene of commercial and naval transactions; and accordingly it appears, that in the reign of the third Edward, the quota of men and ships furnished by Weymouth for that great King's wars, was much larger than that of many ports which now far surpass it in importance. During the wars carried on by the English in France, several at-

tempts were made to burn Weymouth, and in order to add to the security of the district, Henry VIII. built Sandsfoot Castle, a fort situated to the south-west of the town on a high cliff opposite Portland Castle. Soon after that period Weymouth and Melcombe Regis were incorporated by act of Parliament, and in a charter granted to the town by James I., they are described as "great and famous ports of great strength and force to defend the country, and also exercising merchandising, and having much importance in and upon the seas, by reason of which a great number of mariners are constantly employed and nourished."

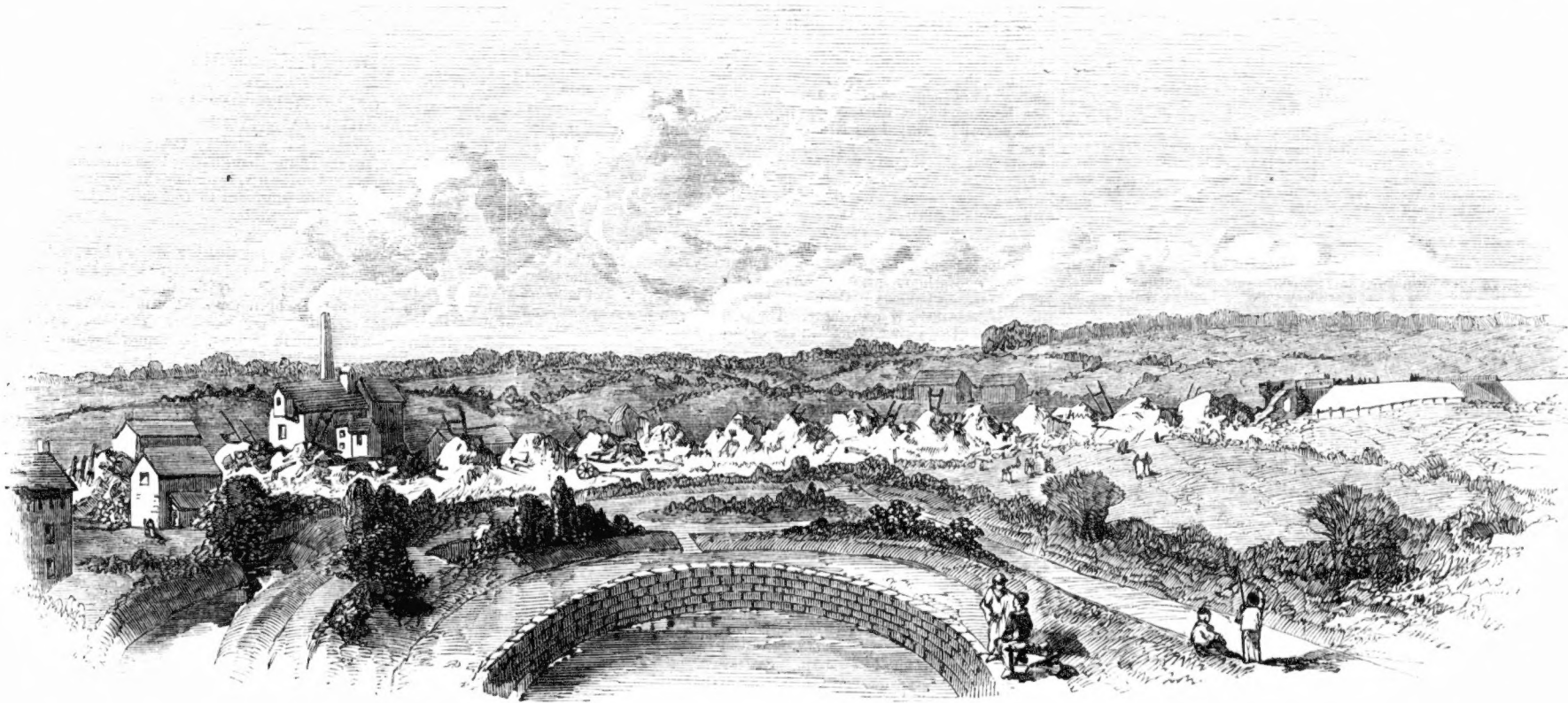
The rise of other towns exercised a baneful influence on the prosperity of Weymouth; and, from various causes, it fell into a declining state. Fortunately, however, the climate was mild, the bay being sheltered to the north by surrounding hills, which slope gradually to the south, towards the beach. Observing the advantages of Weymouth in this respect, Ralph Allen, an invalid from Bath, in 1763, brought the town into repute as a bathing-place; and royal personages are long availed themselves of its fine climate. In 1780, the Duke of Gloucester went to Weymouth, and had a house built for his residence. Nine years later, George the Third paid the place a visit, had a royal lodge erected, and resided there frequently.

Seeing how matters tended, the inhabitants of Weymouth ventured on an improvement which contributed greatly to the beauty of the town. A piece of ground between the bay and the backwater was used as a receptacle for rubbish. Having cleared this away, they formed a fine esplanade, pursuing, to some extent, the general contour of the bay. After this was accomplished, terraces and assembly-rooms, bath-rooms and reading-rooms, and the other features of a watering-place, forthwith appeared; and Weymouth assumed a position among the places to which strangers resort in autumn.

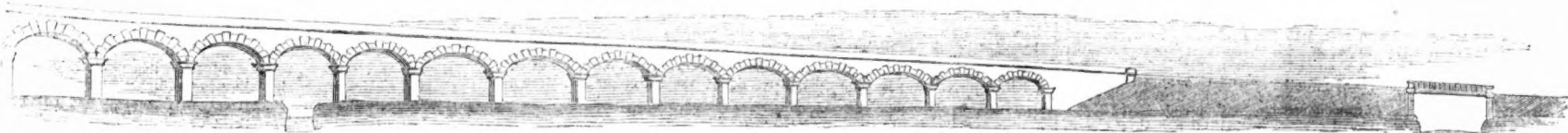
The advantages to be derived by such a town from having a railway, are too obvious to be dwelt upon; and the opening was long anticipated and desired. The welcome event took place on the 18th ult.; but the day was unfavourable for any display of public enthusiasm, and no signs of rejoicing appeared, except the flags which decorated the principal hotels and the shops of the tradesmen. There were, however, large numbers of spectators at the terminus watching the trains as they came and went.

A few days previously the line had been tested by a Government inspector. "Between eleven and twelve," says a local paper, "a special train arrived at Trowbridge station from Weymouth, which place it left about half-past nine o'clock that morning. The Government inspector, and many other gentlemen and officials connected with the Wilts and Somerset Railway, then proceeded on the railroad to Bath in a first and second-class carriage, drawn by the engine 'Mentor,' being the first time any locomotive engine had traversed this line. After several stoppages at the viaducts, bridges, &c., in which some time was necessarily occupied, the train arrived at the Bath station about one o'clock. The line, which is single for the greatest distance, has been pronounced satisfactory, and will be opened for traffic in a few days. The line curves away from the Wilts and Dorset Railway about one mile from the Trowbridge station, through Bradford, Avon Cliff, Freshford, and Stoke, to the junction at Bathampton, where it joins the Great Western, to Bath, Bristol, &c., passing three times under the Kennet and Avon Canal, and six times, by extensive viaducts, over the river Avon."

Our illustration represents the first train passing under the canal by



FALLEN RAILWAY ARCHES AT COWDEN, NEAR COVENTRY.—(FROM A SKETCH BY MR. J. MURRAY, ARCHITECT.)



VIEW OF VIADUCT BEFORE THE ACCIDENT.

the Claverton aqueduct. This aqueduct, which is situated about three miles from Bath, is a remarkably handsome structure, and a wondrous specimen of engineering skill.

FALL OF A RAILWAY VIADUCT NEAR COVENTRY.

WE stated last week that on the morning of Monday, the 26th ult., an accident had occurred on the line of railway between Coventry and Nuneaton—a branch of the London and North-Western. This was nothing less than the falling of a viaduct at Cowden, a short distance from Coventry. The bridge, which consisted of twenty-five arches, was built of stone, and carried the railway over a very important old turnpike road. The traffic of the line was completely stopped; but, fortunately, not the slightest accident befell the passengers, either on the road or railways. A train had passed over the bridge a short time before the accident took place.

ANOTHER MEETING OF UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN.

ANOTHER meeting of unemployed workmen was held on Monday in Smithfield. The assembly, as before, chiefly consisted of men engaged in the building trade, and notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, numbered several thousands. It was resolved that another appeal should be made to the relieving officers of the various parishes; and it was recommended that each man should apply to the workhouse of his own parish. It was also suggested by one of the speakers that if any of their number should misbehave himself on the way he should be handed over to the police.

The men belonging to the various unions then formed themselves into distinct bodies, and two of the most intelligent in each were selected as leaders. To them the following words were addressed, and they signed a paper containing them:—"You are selected by the society to conduct, peaceably and orderly, a body of working men under your care to their parish for relief—not as an act of intimidation, but as an act of duty, in accordance with the law; and if you are refused such relief as the law allows to all destitute persons, you shall forthwith proceed to the sitting magistrate of the district, and present the letter we give you asking his advice, which you are in all respects to obey, and afterwards report progress to the committee."

Two letters were then given to the leaders, one addressed to the overseers, and soliciting "such relief as the law enjoins;" the other to be presented to a magistrate in the case of relief being refused, and simply stating that fact.

The men then started with the view of carrying out the objects for which they had assembled.

At eight o'clock in the evening, a very crowded meeting was held at the Institute, Weston Street, Camden Town, for the purpose of receiving the reports of those deputations.

Mr. Bent, shoemaker, said he was entrusted with the deputation to St. Pancras Workhouse. The married men got a 4lb. loaf, and the single ones a 2lb. loaf.

Mr. Maclin, painter, said he headed about 150 men to St. Luke's Workhouse, where they obtained admittance, and an order to break stones the next day. They went to Worship Street Police-court, and Mr. D'Eyncourt gave them one shilling each out of the poor box, on those who had tickets promising that they would go and break stones. (Cheers.)

Mr. Crab, plasterer, said he took nearly 2,000 to Marylebone Workhouse. The men agreed to go in the morning for relief, and if called upon to break stones they would do so.

Mr. Banks, grainer, gave in the report of the deputation to Shoreditch Workhouse. The relieving officer said they should all have relief, and they had some bread and an order given them to break stones at three-halfpence a bushel. They would show that they were Englishmen and willing to work. (Cheers.)

Mr. Robert Brown, bricklayer, said he was entrusted with the deputation to St. Andrew's, Holborn, and out of the 103 who went to the house, seventy-six were relieved with 4lb. and 2lb. loaves; the rest were to be relieved next day.

Mr. Newton, labourer, made a similar statement respecting an application to the Lambeth Workhouse.

Mr. Parkinson, carpenter, of the Bethnal Green parish, was glad to say that in his parish they were treated better than men had been in some other parishes. The single men had a 2lb. loaf, and the married men a 4lb. loaf. (Bravo.)

Mr. Thomas Reeves, of Whitechapel, reported that when they did not get relief they went to the Thames Police-court, where the kind magistrate gave them a £5 note, to be divided one shilling to the married, and the single 8d. or 10d., as it could be. Between 100 and 150 went to that parish.

Three times three cheers were given for the magistrates at the Thames and Worship Street Police-courts.

Mr. Hibbert, plasterer, in giving his report from Westminster parish, said they were told they had come the wrong time of day. He had an order given him to go in, and he would go in if he could not get work.

Mr. Hunt, glazier, gave in an equally favourable report from Islington.

The Chairman having again addressed those assembled as to the propriety of their maintaining order, this extraordinary meeting, which we feel a sorrowful pride in saying could be witnessed in no other country in Europe, separated.

THE WESTMINSTER PALACE CLOCK.—The face of the great Westminster clock is of cast iron, filled with a new description of white semi-opaque glass. The dial will appear entirely opaque by day, it is hoped, but will, nevertheless, be available for illumination by night. The clock hands will be of copper, made as light as is consistent with the requisite strength to resist the action of the wind. The four dials are to be twenty-two feet each in diameter, the largest, it is believed, in the world with a minute hand; the larger dials on the Continent have only an hour hand. The minute hand, on account of its greater length, velocity, weight, friction, and the action of the wind upon it, requires at least twenty times as much force to drive it as the hour hand. The effects of friction and wind with such hands as these offer difficulties in the way of the clock going even as well as an ordinary church clock, to overcome which what is called remontoire work is used, part of the arrangement being for the purpose of giving a visible motion of the hands at every half minute, when the point of the minute hand will move nearly seven inches. The weight of the hammer was proposed to be not less than four cwt., according to the usual proportion, with a rise of at least a foot, but must now be twelve cwt. There is to be a contrivance for stopping the winding when the clock is going to strike, as the winding of each of the striking parts will probably take two hours. The four quarter bells are about to be cast, and "Big Ben" will shortly be raised to his elevated position by the help of the hydraulic ram. The clock, in the adjustment of which some minor alterations have become necessary, owing to the unexpected weight of "Big Ben," will be placed in the tower as speedily as possible. "Big Ben" sounded officially for the first time at the opening of Parliament on Tuesday.

THE WEATHER AND THE PARKS.—On Sunday, though the ice on the waters of the various parks was in a very dangerous state, large numbers of people ventured on it, and numerous accidents happened, though, almost miraculously, none fatal. On the Serpentine, eight or ten people were immersed on two separate occasions, to say nothing of single accidents; and so brittle was the ice, that the ice-men themselves, with their apparatus, broke through, in the endeavour to save those who had so foolishly risked their lives. Four immersions took place in the Long Water, Kensington Gardens; three in the Round Pond; and in other parks the same result followed from the same recklessness. On Monday, and later days, the same scenes occurred, though the number of skaters was of course not so numerous.

MR. MAYHEW THREATENED.—A letter has been received by Henry Mayhew purporting to be written by the man who, at the late meeting of the Ticket-of-leave men, questioned Mr. Mayhew's motives for investigating the condition of that unfortunate class. The letter was signed "Ned Salmon," and an application was made at the Marylebone Police-court, for a summons against the writer. The magistrate thought it probable that the letter had originated from some of those present at the meeting, as a spite against the man who had made the charges against Mr. Mayhew, and therefore refused the application.

A LIFE LOST FOR A PENNY.—Some days ago a man, named Wilson, residing near the Deptford Victualling Yard, came from Greenwich towards his home, and passed over the Creek Bridge. Whether a stranger to the fact that the toll of a penny was payable for every foot passenger, is not known, but no demand having been made until he had got some yards beyond the paying-place, he refused. Upon this he was given into the custody of a police-officer. It had been raining heavily during the night, and the man was nearly wet to the skin. In this state he was taken to the police-station, where the charge having been duly entered, together with the man's name and address, he was conducted to a cell and there locked up. In the afternoon of the next day he was liberated on bail. Nineteen hours' confinement, however, in a cold cell, with wet clothes, had had its effect upon him. The next morning he attended before the magistrate with some difficulty, and was ordered to pay a fine of five shillings in addition to the penny toll. This money was paid, and the poor fellow returned home, took to his bed, and expired on Friday week, leaving a widow and two young children—one an infant seven months old—totally unprovided for.

FOX AND HENDERSON AND THE DOCKS NAPOLÉON.—The Paris Tribunal of Commerce have pronounced a decision casting a serious stigma on the conduct of Messrs. Fox and Henderson with regard to the Docks Napoleon. Fox and Henderson were the contractors; litigation with the present directors ensued; the Tribunal has pronounced against Fox and Henderson, alleging that they had improperly allowed to former directors a "commission" of 1,800,000 francs on their contract for 24,000,000 francs—that is, made that present to be allowed a certain price for the works; and Fox and Henderson improperly received 32,000 shares—4,000,000 francs. The Tribunal decreed the restitution of these shares, or of the money, by Fox and Henderson, even under pain of imprisonment; and it quashes two conventions made between Fox and Henderson and the late directors, as "stained with fraud."

INNER LIFE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—NO. XXX.

BEGINNING OF THE SESSION.

THE Parliamentary Session has once more commenced, and, of course, we are again at our post to watch the proceedings, and as occasion may offer to present to our readers some further phases of "the Inner Life" of the great representative assembly of the nation. It is six months since we left the House—Palmerston was then perfectly master of the situation, and he still continues to be so. Nor are there any appearances that lead us to expect that he will not weather this Session also. There have been rumours enough of prospective changes, but no rumour has hinted that the dextrous Premier is to retire. One report told us that Gladstone was to join or rather to supplant Disraeli. The celebrated Peelites to lead the Opposition, and Disraeli to be merely a man in the ranks. This we at once dismissed as mere gossamer. Another rumour hinted that the Peelites were to join the Ministry—Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer, *vice* Lewis; and if there were any substantial grounds for this report, there are no appearances at present of such an arrangement being carried out. Gladstone and Co. are still in the Ministerial flank, and however desirable Lord Palmerston may feel it to be to remove these Peelite guerrillas from their position, the way to do so does not seem to have been discovered yet.

DISSOLUTION EXPECTED.

Again a report has been prevalent at the clubs that the Parliament is not to survive the Session. This is the fifth Session, and it is said that though seven are the legal term of its existence, constitutional etiquette and custom require that it should not outlive the fifth, and we happen to know that certain Parliamentary Agents who are generally supposed to be acquainted with the secrets of state, or at least to get an inkling thereof before they are revealed to the prostrate multitude, have shown such signs of activity as to lead to the impression that they confidently expect a general election before long. But really we see no reason why the Premier should dissolve the House—he will never get one that suits his book better than this does. And as to constitutional custom, he will not let that stand in his way; nor will anyone be likely to press upon him this subject. The people care very little about the matter, and the members will of course be the last to urge a dissolution. None of them covet an election; and, moreover, many of them are quite aware that when the day shall come for them to return to their constituents, their blushing parliamentary honours will leave them, never to return. So it is highly probable that the Noble Lord will allow the Parliament to drag out its existence at least till 1858. Longer than that it certainly will not last. All precedent is against a longer life than six sessions.

WALK TO THE HOUSE.

In our journey down to the House, and on our entrance into "the Palace," we found things generally much as usual.

The external appearance of "The Palace" is much the same as it was at the close of the Session. The scaffolding still hides the top of the Clock Tower, and the pinnacles of the Victoria Tower are not finished. Neither are the clock faces yet visible, but behind the boarded screens which have been erected since last we were here—doubtless artisans are at work at them. Big Ben has arrived, as everybody knows; but he is not put in his place, nor is there any immediate prospect of his being hoisted aloft. It is not generally known, that at the bottom of the Clock Tower in the vaults, hitherto an enormous fire has been kept burning for ventilation purposes, thus turning the tower into an air shaft. We suppose this arrangement will be changed on the introduction of the clock.

NEW STATUES, FRESQUES, &c.

On entering Westminster Hall, we notice six new gas candelabras—one on each side of the door of the House, two at the Members' entrance, and two on massive stone pedestals at the foot of the grand staircase. These gas pillars are about ten or twelve feet high, made of brass, and are very handsome; but, from the quantity of flange ornaments (so characteristic of the architect) on the top, they are very much out of harmony with the grand massive old hall. In St. Stephen's Hall we find two additional statues—the great Earl Chatham and Charles James Fox; both are in speaking attitudes. The statue of Chatham is by Macdowall, and that of Fox by Bailey. Both are admirably executed, but these oratorical attitudes are altogether unsuited to a Gothic chamber. The idea embodied in Mediaeval buildings is solemn quietude, which is disturbed by such figures. The statue of Fox, corpulent and clumsy, with uplifted arm, square-cut coat, and short breeches, is to our mind positively an eyesore in such a place. How much more in harmony with the architecture are those "grave and reverend signiors," each in his niche in the Central Hall!

In the corridor leading from the Central Hall to the "Lords," there is a new fresco painting by Cope: the subject is the "Embarkation of the Pilgrim Fathers." This is decidedly one of the best works of the kind in the palace; out we could have wished that it had been placed in the "Commons" department of the House. It is certainly a subject more likely to interest the people than the Lords' spiritual and temporal.

PAINTING STONE.

We have only one more change in the building to notice, but that is a very strange one. All frequenters of the Houses must remember the noble octagon central hall, the grandest feature of the building. Well, in this hall, the stone work got blackened by the gas smoke from the chandelier, and offended the eye of the prim gentlemen who have control over the building. Now what do our readers think has been done to remedy this defect? "They have cleaned the stone." No! guess again. But you will never guess. *They have painted it!* "Impossible!" Well, one would have thought so; but it is done. From floor to ceiling, the whole of the stone-work columns, niches, statues, inscriptions, have all since last Session been covered over with three coats of stone-coloured paint. To whom we are indebted for this piece of Cockneyism we cannot tell. It is not uncommon to paint wood to make it look like stone; but here solid, massive, genuine stone, is painted to make it look like wood. Shams are often daubed with paint to make them appear like realities, but it is something new to paint realities to make them look like shams. And the worst of this precious business is, the paint never can be removed. The mischief is done, and there is no remedy. The great octagon hall is spoiled, and now looks like a mere "Court" in the Crystal Palace.

CHANGES IN THE HOUSE.

In the "House," that is amongst the Members, we shall find many changes. Four Members have died since last Session—to wit, Sir Edward Gooch, Member for *East Suffolk*. Mr. William Lockhart, *Leamington*; Sir Edward Filmer, *West Kent*; and Mr. Brotherton, *Salford*. Lord Heniker takes the place of Sir Edward Gooch, and Mr. Baillie Cochrane has been elected to succeed Mr. William Lockhart. The other vacancies caused by death have not yet been filled up.

There are also other places waiting for writs, namely, *Bandon Bridge*—Lord Barnard, by the death of his father, having become Earl of Bandon. *North Leicestershire*—the Marquis of Granby having succeeded to the dukedom of Rutland. *Dumfriesshire*—Lord Drumlanrig having succeeded to the title of Marquis of Queensberry. *Clonmel*—in the room of Mr. John O'Connell, who has quietly dropped out of the political world into the clerkship of the Hanaper, Ireland. *Greenwich*—to supply the place of Mr. Peter Rolt, who has taken his son-in-law, Mr. Marc's, business, and has, by so doing, become a Government contractor, and therefore disqualified to sit in Parliament. *Aylesbury*—Sir Richard Bethell having been raised to the Attorney-Generalship. *Southampton*—To fill up the place of Sir Alexander Cockburn, now Chief Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. *Buteshire*—Right Hon. James Archibald Stuart Wortley having accepted the office of Solicitor-General. *Isle of Wight*—Mr. Biggs wishing to retire to "mind his private business." *Hull*—To supply the place of Mr. Watson, who has been made Baron of the Exchequer. And *Downpatrick*—To elect a successor to the Hon. Charles Stewart Hardinge, who has succeeded the venerable warrior, his father, as Lord Hardinge. There are rumours of vacancies for Tewkesbury (Mr. Humphrey Brown), Glasgow (Mr. John McGregor), and Tipperary (Mr. James Sadleir). That Mr. Sadleir will be expelled, we think very likely; but we doubt whether either Mr. Brown or Mr. McGregor will resign.

THE MOVER AND SECONDER OF THE ADDRESS.

Sir John William Ramsden, Bart., M.P. for Taunton, the mover of the Address to the Queen, is a very young man. He was born in 1831; he

is therefore only twenty-six years old. He is the son of the late John Charles Ramsden, many years Member for Malton, by Isabella, youngest daughter of the first Lord Dundas. Sir John has done nothing since he has been in the House to attract notice. He probably owes the honour of being selected to move the Address to his title and great wealth. His property lies principally at Huddersfield. He is reported to be the owner of by far the greater portion of that flourishing manufacturing town, and exercises, of course, great influence there. He was elected for Taunton in 1853, when Mr. Arthur Mills was unseated on petition. Sir John had a narrow escape; for, in a contest with Mr. Henry Badoock, he only beat his opponent by five votes. We do not remember that Sir John had ever spoken in the House until he moved the Address. He is a tall, handsome man, of very youthful appearance; very fair, with remarkably light hair. When he first entered the House he was but just of age, and his extremely young looks attracted general attention; indeed, he was so young and fair, and smooth-faced, that, dressed in woman's clothes, he would have passed well for a pretty woman; but the Honourable Member now boasts of whiskers, and has a much more manly appearance.

Sir Andrew Agnew, Bart., the Secunder of the Address, is the son of that famed Sir Andrew who used to head "the Sabbath Observance" movement, some few years ago, with so much zeal, and so little discretion and charity. The old man rests with his fathers, and enjoys now his Sabbath undisturbed. The present Sir Andrew inherits his father's baronetcy and estates; but his father's fiery zeal, indiscretion, and wrong-headedness he does not seem to have succeeded to. He was born in 1818, and is therefore thirty-nine years old this year. He was educated at Harrow; and married, in 1846, Lady Louisa, the daughter of the Earl of Gainsborough. He first entered Parliament in 1856, as Member for Wiltshire, succeeding Lord Dalrymple, who retired. Sir Andrew is a steady, though not a servile, supporter of the Government. He has not often spoken in the House, and makes no pretensions to eloquence; but, like most of the Scotch Members, he can say what he has to say in a manner which, if it does not excite the House, generally commands attention.

SEARCHING FOR GUY FAUX.

THE preliminary ceremony on the opening of Parliament, that which precedes all others, is the examination of the vaults by the Yeoman of the Guard, to see that no modern Guy Faux lies concealed in those long and intricate passages, with the fell purpose of blowing up the three estates of the realm. Every child knows the history of Guy Faux; and it is also pretty generally known that this search used to be rigorously made; but few people, however, are aware that this ceremony is still performed, though we can hardly say rigorously. For, the "vaults" now are so extensive, being about the eighth of a mile long, three storeys in depth, and occupying some eight acres of ground, that it is doing no injustice to the zeal of the Yeoman of the Guard to say, that there must be many holes and corners in this vast space in which a popish incendiary might lurk undiscovered. But, no doubt, the examination is sufficiently well performed; for, as now there are a considerable number of Roman Catholics in Parliament, it is hardly likely, even if the times and men's dispositions were not changed, that any zealous Papist would hazard the risk of sending his friends flying in the air, for the gratification of blowing up Mr. Spooner and other rabid Protestants. But, in truth, the times are changed, and we are changed with them; and the only blowing up which Protestant zealots need fear is that of the tongue. And at this sort of blowing up, they are certainly as good adepts as their popish opponents. We will back Mr. Spooner any day against Mr. Bowyer; and "The Sentinel" may be fairly pitted against the most violent organ of the Papacy, with a certainty of bearing away the palm. Nevertheless, the ceremony is still performed; and was gone through as usual on Tuesday last. The examiners are the Yeomen of the Guard, under the command of their captain, and accompanied by the Deputy-Usher of the Black Rod. The dress of the Yeomen of the Guard is the same as the Beef-eaters of the Tower. And as the troop marches across the Lobby in its picturesque costume, headed by its captain, in modern military dress, and the Deputy-Black Rod, in Court guise, a strangely confused scene is presented; and especially so, if the "peelers," in blue coats and glazed hats, are in their places. The architecture of the building and the dresses of the guard harmonise very well, for both date from about the same period; but Mr. Palmer's costume belongs to the early part of the Georgian era; the captain's, to this century; whilst the policeman's, is but of yesterday.

ENTERING THE VAULTS.

This is rather a trying operation; for as many of the Guard are old, and all of them, from having little to do, and plenty to eat, are rather corpulent; and as they are moreover encumbered with dresses and halberds, made for show and not for work, descending down a narrow, steep ladder is not a pleasant job—"Facilis descensus Averni"—easy, but certainly not agreeable. Our artist has sketched the scene which not unfrequently occurs on these occasions; and has also given the Guard in procession along the dark interminable vaulted passages, lighted only by the hand-lanterns which each man carries.

Imperial Parliament.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

HER MAJESTY'S MESSAGE.

PARLIAMENT was opened on Tuesday by Commission. A number of Peers were present, and the Lower House having been summoned, the members made their appearance at the bar, headed by the Speaker.

The Lord Chancellor then proceeded to read her Majesty's message, which was as follows:—

"MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

"We are commanded to assure you that her Majesty has great satisfaction in recurring again to the advice and assistance of her Parliament.

"We are commanded by her Majesty to inform you that difficulties, which arose in regard to some of the provisions of the Treaty of Paris, delayed the complete execution of the stipulations of that Treaty. Those difficulties have been overcome in a satisfactory manner, and the intentions of the Treaty have been fully maintained.

"An insurrectionary movement which took place in September last in the Swiss canton of Neuchâtel, for the purpose of re-establishing in that canton the authority of the King of Prussia as Prince of Neuchâtel, led to serious differences between his Prussian Majesty and the Swiss Confederation, threatening at one time to disturb the general peace of Europe.

"But her Majesty commands us to inform you that, in concert with her august ally the Emperor of the French, she is endeavouring to bring about an amicable settlement of the matters in dispute, and her Majesty entertains a confident expectation that an honourable and satisfactory arrangement will be concluded.

"In consequence of certain discussions which took place during the Conferences at Paris and which are recorded in the Protocols that were laid before you, her Majesty and the Emperor of the French caused communications to be made to the Government of the King of the Two Sicilies, for the purpose of inducing him to adopt a course of policy calculated to avert dangers which might disturb that peace which had been so recently restored to Europe.

"Her Majesty commands us to inform you, that the manner in which those friendly communications were received by his Sicilian Majesty, was such as to lead her Majesty and the Emperor of the French to discontinue their diplomatic relations with his Sicilian Majesty, and they have, accordingly, withdrawn their missions from the Court of Naples.

"Her Majesty has directed that papers relating to this subject shall be laid before you.

"Her Majesty commands us to inform you that she has been engaged in negotiations with the Government of the United States, and also with the Government of Honduras, which she trusts will be successful in removing all causes of misunderstanding with respect to Central America.

"Her Majesty has concluded a treaty of friendship and commerce with Siam, which will be laid before you.

"Her Majesty commands us to express to you her regret that the conduct of the Persian Government has led to hostilities between her Majesty and

the Shah of Persia. The Persian Government, in defiance of repeated warnings, and in violation of its engagements, has besieged and captured the important city of Herat.

"We are commanded by her Majesty to inform you that a British naval and military force despatched from Bombay has taken possession of the Island of Karack and of the town of Bushire, with a view to induce the Shah to accede to the just demands of her Majesty's Government. Her Majesty has seen with satisfaction that the naval and military forces employed on this occasion have displayed their accustomed gallantry and spirit.

"Her Majesty commands us to inform you that acts of violence, insults to the British flag, and infraction of treaty rights, committed by the local authorities at Canton, and a pertinacious refusal of redress, have rendered it necessary for her Majesty's officers in China to have recourse to measures of force to obtain satisfaction.

"Those measures had, up to the date of the last accounts, been taken with great forbearance, but with signal success as regards the conflicts to which they had led.

"We are commanded to inform you that her Majesty trusts that the Government of Peking will see the propriety of affording the satisfaction demanded, and of faithfully fulfilling its Treaty engagements.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

"Her Majesty has directed the Estimates for the ensuing year to be laid before you.

"They have been prepared with every attention to economy, and with due regard to the efficient performance of the public service at home and abroad.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

"Her Majesty commands us to inform you that bills will be submitted to your consideration for the consolidation and the amendment of important portions of the law; and her Majesty doubts not that you will give your earnest attention to matters so deeply affecting the interests of all classes of her subjects.

"Her Majesty commands us to recommend to your consideration the expediency of renewing for a further period the privileges of the Bank of England, the conditions imposed on the issue of Bank notes in the United Kingdom, and the state of the law relating to Joint-Stock Banks.

"Her Majesty commands us to express the gratification which it affords her to witness the general well-being and contentment of her people, and to find that, notwithstanding the sacrifices unavoidably attendant upon such a war as that which has lately terminated, the resources of the country remain unimpaired, and its productive industry continues unchecked in its course of progressive development.

"Her Majesty commits with confidence the great interests of the country to your wisdom and care, and she fervently prays that the blessings of Almighty God may attend your deliberations, and prosper your councils for the advancement of the welfare and happiness of her loyal and faithful people."

At the conclusion of the ceremony, both Houses adjourned—the Lords until five, and the Commons until a quarter to four o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS.

At the re-assembling of the House of Peers, her Majesty's Speech having been read by the Lord Chancellor.

The Earl of Cork moved the address, which was seconded by the Earl of Airlie.

The Earl of Derby regretted that he could not agree with the encomiums lavished upon the Speech which her Majesty's advisers had presented to Parliament. It was, in fact, most vague, shadowy, and unsubstantial. The reference to the other House of Parliament was unsatisfactory in the last degree; in fact, they were merely requested to make certain formal financial arrangements; but in making those arrangements he thought Parliament would be wanting in its duty if it did not demand the fulfilment of its solemn pledge, that the income-tax should cease and determine in 1860. But, meagre as was the Speech, it did not contain that formerly well-known paragraph in which the Sovereign congratulated the Parliament on the steady maintenance of peace. On the contrary, now the only Sovereign so alluded to was the King of Siam. It was mentioned with much satisfaction that in concert with our august ally we had put the Neufchâtel question in a fair way of being adjusted, whereas he quite believed that if we had not interfered at all the matter would have been settled more speedily and amicably. But Lord Palmerston had such a peculiar skill in getting out of a difficulty that he seemed to seek such situations. Turning to another portion of the Speech, which referred to our relations with Naples, he asked, had we not played with the question of Italian liberty, while the principal result of the Paris Conference was to make the Austrian rule in Italy more fixed and more permanent than ever? He then proceeded to comment upon the conduct of the Government in not calling Parliament together when the struggle with Persia became inevitable. But such remarks applied with still greater force to the proceedings in China, which had filled him with amazement. Was the bombardment of the great commercial city of Canton,—the indiscriminate slaughter of innocent and guilty in one common doom,—an act of forbearance, as it was termed in the Speech? He confessed he could not look upon the state of our foreign relations without distrust and misgiving. If he did not, then, move an amendment to the Address, it was in the hope that the opinions which he now undoubtedly entertained would be modified by reading the protocols which the Government were of course prepared to lay before their Lordships.

The Earl of CLARENDON was sorry that Lord Derby had not adhered to the usual practice, and refrained from any allusion to foreign topics until he was in possession of the full information which would shortly be laid before the House. Had he waited for these documents, he would have been saved the erroneous impression he appeared to entertain with regard to the Neufchâtel question. It was, indeed, true that her Majesty's Ministers had taken advantage of the Paris Conference to consider the question of the state of Italy, but the course which the Allies had adopted had met with the approval of the principal Governments of Europe. With regard to the Persian war, it was very far from being the groundless quarrel which the public seemed quite to believe. The capture of Herat could not be regarded with indifference when such a conquest threatened at once the neutrality and independence of Afghanistan, both of which were necessary to the security of our Indian empire. He much regretted to hear the terms in which Lord Derby had spoken of the conduct of the English authorities in China. The course which had been taken had only been resorted to when all other steps failed.

Earl GREY said he could not characterise the war with Persia as other than unjust and impolitic. If it was the bugbear of Russian influence which our Government professed to dread, the late war showed the groundlessness of such a plea. At the same time, while fearing Russia, we seemed bent on working out her ends; for what was more likely to throw Persia into the arms of that Power than the present unjustifiable invasion of her territory and destruction of her little standing army? Lord GREY concluded by moving an amendment, to the effect that it was the duty of her Majesty's advisers to summon Parliament together and inform them of the state of affairs with Persia before declaring war.

Lord GRANVILLE defended the course which the Government had taken in regard to Persia, and in the declaration of war through the Governor-General of India instead of at home.

Lord BROUGHAM spoke strongly against the further continuance of the Income-tax; and then reverted to the necessity for legal reform, especially in those laws relating to secondary punishments.

The LORD CHANCELLOR agreed with the Noble and Learned Lord as to the necessity for law reform. He had himself given notice that evening of his intention to bring forward at an early period three bills for the purpose of amending the laws relating to marriage and divorce, testamentary jurisdiction, and ecclesiastical law. In the other House a bill would also be brought in to meet those crimes of breach of trust such as had lately shocked the public confidence. His Lordship indicated several other reforms of a similar nature to which the Government intended directing early attention; among others, a bill to be brought in by Sir George Grey, having reference to secondary punishments.

Earl GREY's amendment was then put:—Content, 12; non-content, 45; majority against the amendment, 33.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS.

The Address was moved by Sir J. RAMSDEN, who reviewed the principal topics touched upon in the Speech, noticing the omission of any reference to our convict and criminal population, and expressing a hope that the House would be speedily called upon to record its opinion respecting a state of things which, he said, was as disgraceful to the Legislature as it was grievous to the community.

THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SIR A. AGNEW.

Mr. DISRAELI, after a passing allusion to the omissions in the Royal Speech, described the condition of the great Powers at the termination of the late struggle as affording a fair prospect of permanent tranquillity for this country; and he wanted to know, he said, why we were disappointed of this expectation—why wars and rumours of wars should pervade the whole Speech? He proceeded to argue that the seeds of these difficulties were sown immediately after the treaty of peace; first, with reference to Italy, our intermeddling with the affairs of which country had for six months diverted England from the consideration of its domestic interests, at that very time a secret treaty being in existence guaranteeing to Austria the whole of her Italian dominions. Then came the Russian difficulty. What, he asked, was the reason why we were on the point of losing

one of the very objects for which we went to war? He contended that it was owing to a blunder of our own negotiator, who was a principal member of the Cabinet. All these difficulties in foreign affairs were attributable to Ministers, who, when the question about Bolgrad and the Isle of Serpents was adjusted, had advised a course in the Neufchâtel dispute calculated, but for the prudence of the Swiss, to embroil Europe. The tranquillity of Europe was, however, so well established that even a firebrand Minister could not subvert it; but in another quarter of the globe we had, not rumours of wars, but actual war, and he thought it was the duty of that House to inquire into the cause of these perpetually recurring difficulties. Turning his attention to domestic topics, Mr. Disraeli adverted to the income-tax, pointing out the importance of coming to an early decision upon this source of supply. He intimated his intention, on that day fortnight, to ask for a committee of the whole House, with the view of proposing certain resolutions on this subject.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER replied briefly to Mr. Disraeli's remarks upon the finances of the country. As to the future year, it was his anxious wish to lay his financial statement before the House at the earliest possible opportunity.

Mr. GLADSTONE thought there was justice in the statement of Mr. Disraeli that the fruits of peace had been but partially realised. He noticed the absence in the Royal Speech of any promise of information as to the questions which arose respecting the treaty of Paris, the settlement of the Central American dispute, and the Persian war. He should have been glad, he said, if the unhappy events in China had been noticed in the Speech in terms somewhat different; and, with regard to Persia, he wished to know by whose authority that war had been waged, and at whose charge it was to be carried on. If the country was to bear the charge, or any part of it, then it was the duty of the Government to have called Parliament together at an earlier period. With reference to the income-tax, he earnestly desired, he said, to bring the country to a consideration of the question, which must be first disposed of, as to what was the just and reasonable scale of expenditure. If the 9d. tax were given up without an equivalent reduction of the estimates, there must be either new taxation or a loan. He fully admitted that the arrangement of 1853 was of the nature of a compact, in conjunction with the succession duty. It was fair, therefore, to raise the question whether the pledge should not now be fulfilled, and it would be his endeavour to secure its fulfilment.

Lord PALMERSTON, observing that Mr. Disraeli had heretofore displayed talent in the composition of works of imagination, pronounced the greater part of his speech a romance. He detailed the course of proceeding which resulted in the treaty of peace, and contended that the misunderstanding as to the boundary line had originated in no want of geographical knowledge on the part of the British Plenipotentiaries. It was not desirable, he thought, that the papers relating to these differences should be laid before Parliament. He explained and vindicated the course pursued by the Government regarding the Neufchâtel question, denying that they had given such advice to the Swiss as Mr. Disraeli insinuated. As to any treaty guaranteeing to Austria her Italian possessions, he was totally ignorant of its existence; and had this Government been consulted as to such a treaty, their advice would have been adverse to it. With regard to the operations against Persia, they were undoubtedly taken on the responsibility of her Majesty's Government. Within the last few days he had been informed that the Persian Ambassador at Paris had expressed to Lord Cowley his readiness to enter into negotiations for the settlement of the question. It would not, therefore, pending this negotiation, be expedient to produce the papers. The operations against China had resulted from a violation of the treaty of Nankin. He hoped that this dispute, too, would be speedily adjusted. Having replied to other objections put forward by Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone, he expressed his concurrence in the principle laid down by the latter, that the scale of public expenditure should be first fixed, and then the means provided for defraying it. To discuss this question, therefore, before the estimates were prepared was premature.

Mr. BAILEY strongly condemned the expedition to the Persian Gulf, which, he observed, had been determined upon while Parliament was sitting.

Lord J. RUSSELL, observing that the explanations given by Lord Palmerston upon several points had been full and satisfactory, expressed his regret that so much asperity had been manifested respecting the misunderstanding on the subject of the article of the treaty defining the boundary line. After a few remarks upon the Neufchâtel question, he said he had heard with satisfaction the announcement that negotiations had commenced for terminating the Persian quarrel, fearing that the expedition to Bushire meant more than it appeared to mean, and might lead to serious consequences. He was of opinion that it was the constitutional duty of the Government, when the expedition was determined upon, to call Parliament together. With regard to Italy, he confessed that he was not satisfied with what had taken place. If the King of Naples had been informed that certain terms had been agreed upon between France and Great Britain, and had been required to assent to them on pain of compulsion, he believed the King would at once have assented. The course actually pursued had been abortive, and had made things worse than before. He described the deplorable condition of the Papal States under foreign occupation, and asked why this state of things should continue for years without remonstrance. He had no doubt, he said, if a day were fixed when the occupation of the Roman Legations by Austrian troops should cease, there would be some chance of an independent State, while a danger to Europe would be removed. He concluded with some reflections upon the subject of the finances.

Mr. M. GIBSON dissented from that part of the Address which approved of the Persian war, and reiterated Mr. Gladstone's question, which had not, he said, been answered, "Who was to pay for the war?" He condemned the course adopted towards the King of Naples, and suggested that it would be wiser for this country to desist from dictating to foreign nations what government they should have. He had great difficulty, he said, in the absence of information, in agreeing to that part of the Address which related to China.

After some observations by Mr. Hadfield and Mr. V. Smith regarding the cultivation of cotton in India, the motion was agreed to, and the House adjourned.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE ADDRESS.

Sir JOHN RAMSDEN brought up the report on the Address in reply to the Royal Speech. On the motion that the report be read a second time:

Mr. HADFIELD protested against the present mode of receiving communications from the throne. Those communications never contained anything which was not already known, and rarely, if ever, referred to the Colonies or our Indian empire. Now, when it was remembered that our Colonies exceed in territorial extent the whole of Europe together, while India contained something like 1,100,000 square miles, it did appear to him that the omission of all reference to them in speeches from the throne was a grievous mistake. He then went on to deplore the neglect which was especially cast upon the people and the commercial resources of India.

Admiral WALTHO thought that it would not be prudent to go into the Chinese question until the papers could be laid before the House, but he could not help saying that the retribution inflicted exceeded the provocation received. As regarded the Persian expedition, he thought great credit was due to the Bombay Government for the readiness with which they had fitted it out, and to the officers engaged in it.

Sir J. FITZGERALD seconded the appeal which Mr. Hadfield had made to the Government on the subject of India.

Mr. R. V. SMITH admitted the importance of the question, but he was at a loss to see what the Hon. Member would have the Government do. If the Hon. Member would submit a motion on the subject, he should be ready to consider it.

After a few words from Mr. KINNAIRD, the report was read a second time, and agreed to, when the House adjourned.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Earl SPENCER brought up her Majesty's gracious answer to the Address from their Lordship's House.

The Earl of ALBEMARLE intimated his intention to bring forward a resolution expressing the opinion that diplomatic relations should not be renewed with Persia. The Earl of CLARENDON, in reply to questions, stated that no specific instructions had been sent out to Sir J. Bowring, but that he was generally empowered to enforce the treaty by which free access to Canton was conceded to British merchants.

Under cover of a question to the Secretary of War, the Earl of CARDIGAN rebutted the allegations against him contained in a work lately published under the signature of "A Staff Officer." He complained that his request to have the author, whom he asserted to be Major the Hon. S. Calthorpe, brought to a court-martial, had been refused by the Commander-in-Chief.

Lord PANMURE remarked that the authorship of the work in question, if suspected, was not avowed, and recommended Lord Cardigan to rest contented with the high testimonials he had received from his own immediate superiors.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Mr. SPOONER gave notice, for Thursday next, of a motion designed to procure the withdrawal of the Maynooth grant.

Mr. LABOUCHERE moved for the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the condition of the British possessions under the administration of the Hudson's Bay Company. The license under which the Company held their monopoly over a vast area of country would expire in 1859; and before any decision was formed with regard to renewing the license, further information respecting the condition of the territories in question should be obtained.

Mr. ROBECK believed that ample information was already in existence to justify immediate legislation on the subject. He urged many reasons for abolishing the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company, and throwing open the provinces now under their rule for free colonisation.

Mr. ADDERLEY concurred in this view.

Mr. GLADSTONE considered fuller inquiry very necessary. Believing that no

doubt existed as to the propriety of refusing to renew the license, he thought Parliament ought to reflect whether they were not bound to give the Company a certain compensation.

After remarks from Mr. Henley, Mr. Laing, Mr. H. Baillie, and Mr. G. Butt, followed by some explanations from Mr. Labouchere, the motion was agreed to.

THE WAR WITH PERSIA.

OCCUPATION OF KARACK, AND CAPTURE OF BUSHIRE.

BUSHIRE, the most important port and fortress in the Persian Gulf, has been captured by the British. Karack, an island in the Gulf, had previously been captured, and occupied in the name of the Queen by the British forces. Great Britain now commands the whole Persian Gulf, and is completely mistress of that road to India. The fleet made sail for Bushire, in three divisions, on the 26th of November. On the 29th, the steam-frigate *Feroze*, towing two transports, and the corvette *Falkland*, hove in sight of the town, affording to the garrison and inhabitants the first certain information of the approach of a British force. The Governor immediately addressed Captain Jones, the English resident of the town, inquiring as to the destination of the vessels, and their errand in Persian waters. The Resident's reply was despatched on the 3rd of December from the flag-ship *Assaye*, whither he had repaired for conference with General Stalker and Sir Henry Leake, commanding the expedition. It announced that the functions of the writer in connection with Persia had ceased by order of the British Government; and together with Captain Jones's letter, a copy of the proclamation of war put forth by the Governor-General of India, was sent into the town. No answer was received to these communications, and, on the day following, the 4th, the island of Karack was occupied by British troops. On the 6th, the transports, which had been somewhat scattered by head winds, having rejoined, the fleet dropped down to Haila Bay, twelve miles to the south-east of Bushire. Eight gun-boats, armed with 24-pounder howitzers, were sent in advance, and by a few well-directed shots cleared a date grove near the beach of a party of the enemy, who retired with the loss, as was afterwards discovered, of a leader of some note. The disembarkation then proceeded without molestation, and continued for two days. No beasts of burden being procurable, tents and baggage of all kinds were left in the ships, and the men landed with three days' rations in their haversacks. Forty-eight hours were required to get the whole body on shore and in motion; and when on the morning of the 9th they commenced their march in two brigades northwards, by the line of the coast, the ships of war, led by the Admiral, Sir Henry Leake, kept abreast of them, and as near the land as the depth of water permitted. The first brigade, commanded by Colonel Stopford, was on the right; the second, under Colonel Honner, on the left.

By noon the old Portuguese fort of Reshire began to be approached. The position was naturally a strong one, the walls were good, and protected by a dry ditch forty feet deep. In front was a heavy redoubt scarped on the side next the sea, and the other two were strong and well protected. The flag-ship *Assaye* was unable to approach within one thousand seven hundred yards of the place, but at this distance her shells were so effective that the bulk of the enemy fled, leaving eight hundred, who had been driven back by our advancing columns, within the work, and who seemed determined to fight it out to the last. The garrison, on our approach, had at first sallied out, and at one time nearly attained possession of a gun. The vanguard, which had pushed too much a-head, were compelled to make a rapid counter-march. Our troops seemed anxious to make a dash, and unfortunately charged at the bayonet's point, sacrificing valuable lives that might have been spared had the shelling been continued. Brigadier Stopford fell leading on the 6th, shot through the heart, and pierced by many wounds; while Lieutenants Uttersen and Warren, of the 20th, were killed by his side; Captain Wood dangerously wounded; about fifty men were killed or wounded. The enemy were without artillery, but defended themselves stoutly with their matchlocks; when driven to flight, they were charged down upon by the 3rd Cavalry, and "fearfully mowed." Here Colonel Malet fell, shot through the heart by a wounded Arab, whom he had just ordered to be spared. The troops bivouacked for the night on the bare ground, and under the open sky.

Captain Jones, the resident, who had gone on board the *Assaye*, was now deputed into the town with a flag of truce, carrying also the summons of surrender, and the terms offered the garrison. The flag, however, was fired on; and the envoy returned, his mission unaccomplished. An apology was almost immediately sent from the town; and the declaration of war of the Governor-General and letter of terms proposed were returned by the messenger.

Meanwhile General Stalker intimated to the Admiral his intention of advancing with all his troops on Bushire the following morning (10th of December), and the fleet was immediately disposed in order of battle—first dismantling the enemy's newly-erected earthworks, and then moving with a view of breaching the south wall of the town. The tide was favourable, and so eager was everyone to close in, that every ship was laid aground at high water, and daybreak found them all ready to open on the fort. A flag of truce, begging for twenty-four hours' further delay, now made its appearance. The request was at once refused; and at eight the signal to engage was hoisted, and a storm of shot and shell at once poured in. The redoubt south of the town, where the enemy had assembled in force to resist our troops, was the chief object of attention, and, notwithstanding the enormous distance, it was speedily cleared, the defenders retiring within the walls. As this work commanded the walls, much importance was attached to it by both parties, and General Stalker was advancing upon it when it was abandoned just as his line was being formed. Though their small guns were useless, the courage and perseverance with which the larger ones were worked surpassed all expectation. The *Semiramis*, *Feroze*, *Victoria*, and *Falkland*, were repeatedly struck both in hull and rigging; yet, strange to tell, not a man was hurt. By noon the batteries were all silenced, and the troops were preparing for the assault, when the flag-staff was struck down in token of submission. The capitulation found at first but little favour with the army, and in the ranks of the 64th especially there were growls of "No, no!" "Assault, assault!"

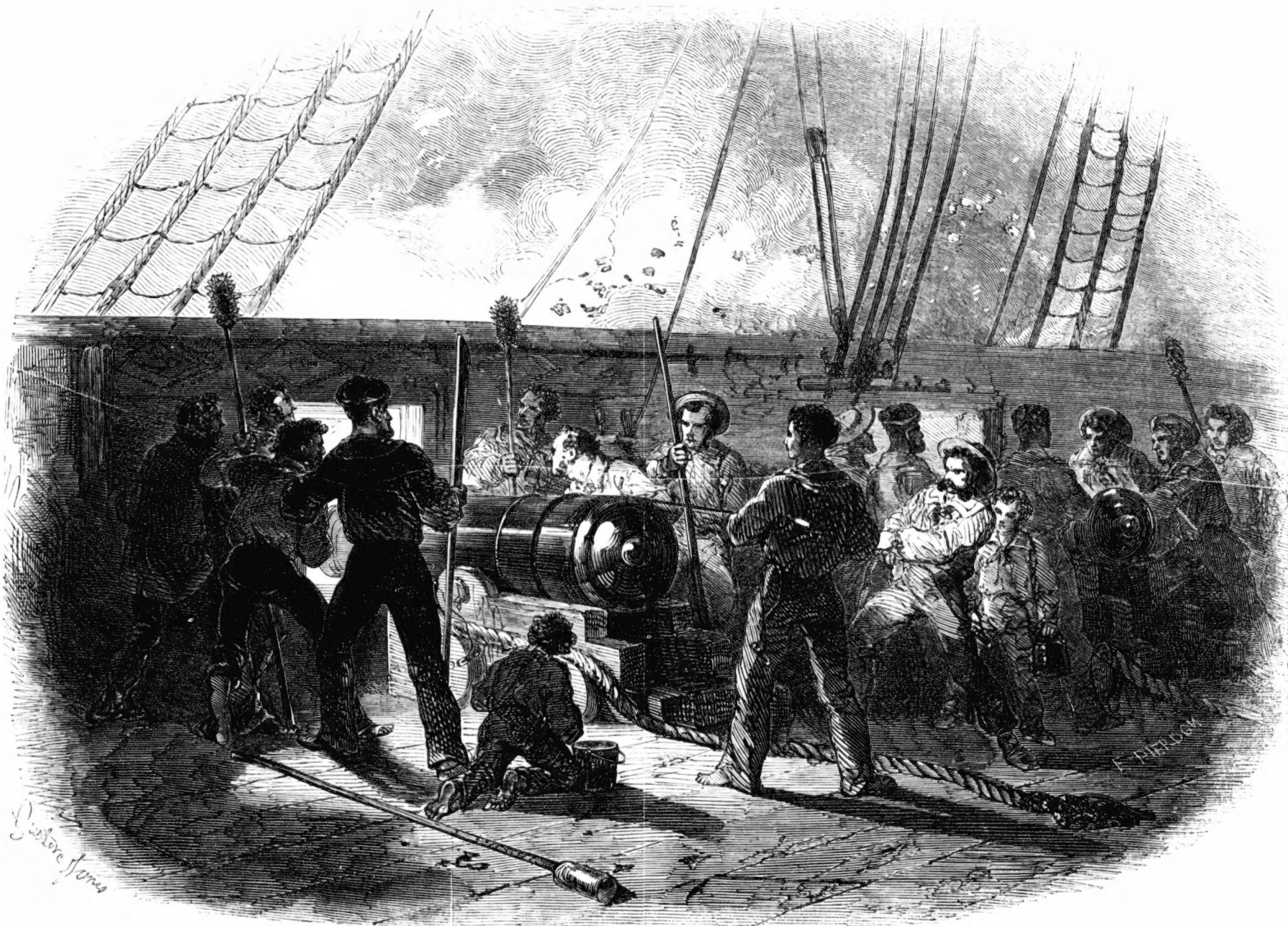
The Governor and his staff immediately came and surrendered themselves; the garrison, from one thousand five hundred to two thousand in number, laid down their arms, and at four o'clock the British flag was hoisted over the town, the troops appointed to garrison it having marched in at sunset. A large proportion of the Persian army had fled as the British approached—numbers were drowned in attempting to escape. About three thousand in all were said to have perished. Sixty-five guns, many of them brass, most of them in good condition, and some of them of large calibre, with vast quantities of warlike stores and small arms, fell into our hands. Active operations having thus for a time been brought to a close, the army prepared to encamp and throw up strong field-works and entrenchments just under the walls of the town. The prisoners, after being disarmed, were conveyed some way into the interior, and then liberated.

Three days after the fall of the place, Sir Henry Leake left in the *Assaye* for Bombay, taking with him the three principal prisoners, the captured flag, &c. While running down the coast on his way to Bassadore, the Admiral was boarded by an Arab chief. The object of his visit was, it appeared, to proffer the services of his tribe in our war with the Persians. All the tribes of the coast, he said, would prefer our rule to that of the Shah. In the course of the interview a valuable piece of information was obtained from him. Near a town on the coast, called Lingar, a well-equipped Persian force of 3,000 men was assembled, with the intention of crossing to the Island of Kishm and attacking our depot station of Bassadore. Dismissing the sheikh with fair words, Sir Henry steamed on, and soon coming abreast of the Persian camp, opened upon it with his heavy guns. His fire was instantly returned, but only from nine-pounder field guns, of which the balls failed to reach the ship, while the eight-inch shot and shell crashed through the camp, knocking over men, horses, and camels, and flinging the tent-canvas to the winds. As a matter of course, the enemy had to retire, but they did it coolly and well. They may abandon their views upon Bassadore; but, even if they do not, the *Ponjab*, lying there now, and a considerable force of Marines is entrenched on shore.

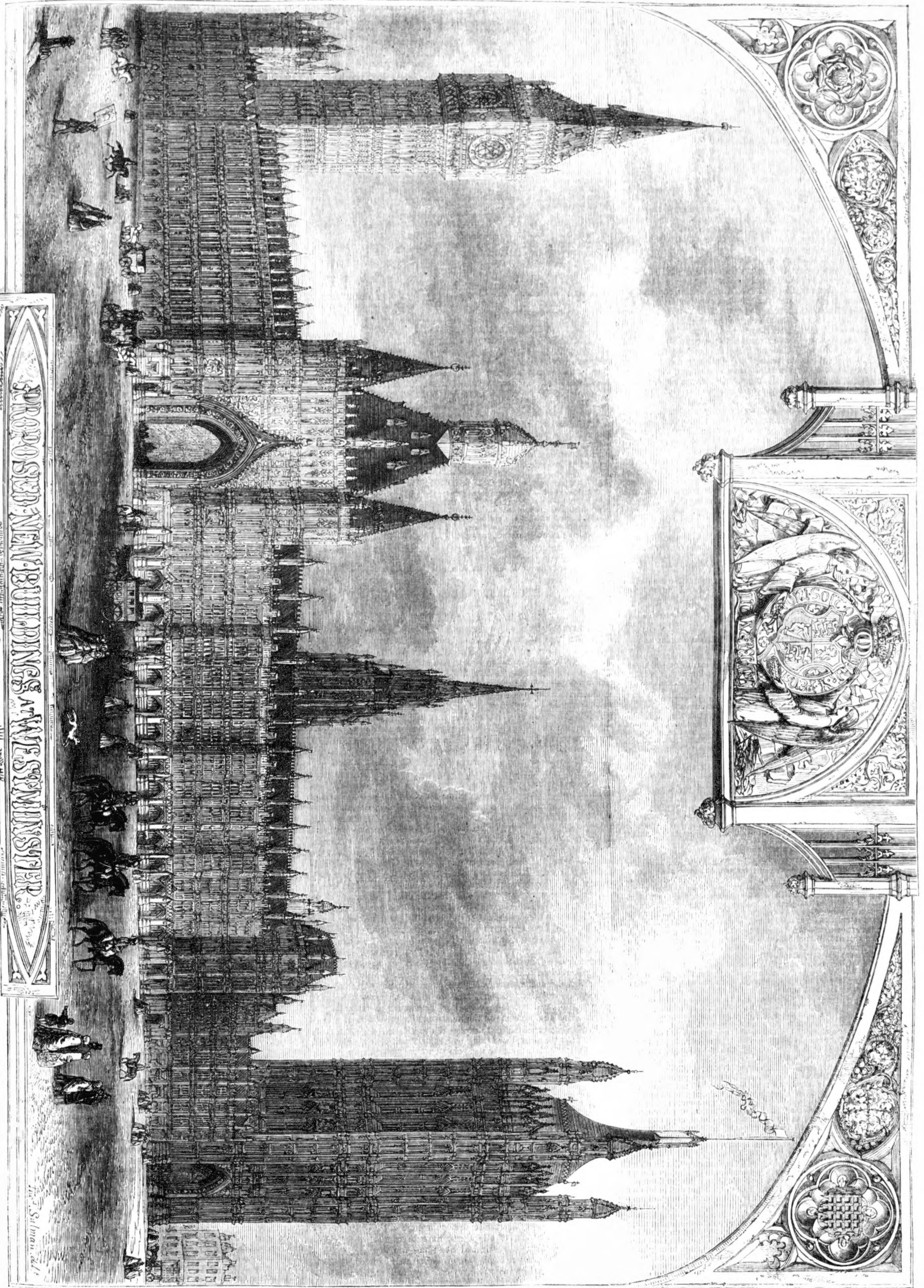
A further force of 25,000 men has been ordered to be despatched from India. Lieutenant-General Sir James Outram, resident at Lucknow, has returned before his sick leave was expired, from England, to assume supreme political and military charge.



THE ATTACK ON BUSHIRE BY THE BRITISH FLEET.



Firing a broadside against the Bushire forts.



THE EXTENSION OF THE NEW PALACE FROM ST STEPHEN'S PORCH TO THE CLOCK TOWER.—(DESIGNED BY SIR CHARLES BARRY)

PROPOSED NEW BUILDINGS AT WESTMINSTER

J. C. Salmon del.

PROPOSED NEW BUILDINGS AT WESTMINSTER.

Our readers are doubtless aware that considerable interest has recently been excited in regard to the architecture of our public buildings, by the requisitions put forth in the invitation to the architects of all countries to compete in furnishing designs for the Government Offices projected at Whitehall. Between the end of September, when the official documents were issued, and the 20th of March, the last day on which designs can be received, previously to their being exhibited at Westminster Hall, there is time allowed for preparation. The invitation is, of course, tempting to ambitious aspirants, as the public works to be executed afford one of those substantial opportunities for distinction which occur once in half a century. Supposing, says the "Athenaeum," the architect turning his back to Charles at Charing Cross, and looking down Whitehall towards Westminster, the space to be dealt with begins just beyond the Horse Guards and ends at the new Houses of Parliament. Till Richmond Terrace is reached it is bounded by Whitehall on the east,—but beyond Richmond Terrace, a huge sweep of all buildings existing betwixt Parliament Street and the river is permissible, and an embankment of the Thames sanctioned. Westward, the ground to be covered is defined by that entire block of buildings beyond the Horse Guards in St. James's Park bounded by Storey's Gate, Great George Street, and Parliament Street. Room and verge enough, it will be owned, are provided in the space handed over to the competitors, and a fair field for play for architectural invention, seeing that the design must include one great thoroughfare, the approaches to one great bridge, and may bring in a quay frontage of some extent,—thus beginning that gradual embellishment of the banks of the Thames which it has been the dream of many interested in our metropolitan improvements to fancy executed.

"From low St. James's up to high St. Paul's."

To enter into the vast amount of details which must be provided for, is of course, at an early day like this, impossible. Supposing them all mastered—supposing Treasury, Foreign Office, War, Colonies, and all their kindred ministries, adequately provided for—the question of style will remain sufficiently difficult. Such being the state of matters, our readers will welcome the engraving on the previous page, which represents the new building proposed by Sir Charles Barry.

It appears by official papers, that with regard to the completion of what is called the "New Palace of Westminster," Sir Charles deems it necessary that New Palace Yard should be enclosed on the north and west sides, and that it should form part of the new palace, as it once did of the old; that the principal entrance for the public should be at the north-west corner of the proposed quadrangle; that the new structure, forming the west side of this quadrangle, should be continued southward to join the existing building at St. Stephen's porch. This—as will be seen by our engraving—would form a façade to St. Margaret Street and Old Palace Yard, with the convenience of a covered footway throughout the whole extent of it. By means of these additional buildings, the irregular and incongruous character of the New Palace on the land side would be removed, and a degree of unity given in harmony with that part which is seen from the river. Moreover, the principal entrance to the palace would then be a marked and important feature of the edifice; and the effect would be to appropriate the waste space, which now injures the appearance of the locality, to useful purposes, such as public-offices connected with the administration or legislation of the country.

THE MURDER IN WALWORTH.

BACON and his wife were re-examined on Wednesday. As on the previous examination, the husband was careful to screen himself as much as possible from the gaze of the court; and the wife so placed herself that her husband could not see her.

Inspector Young was examined at considerable length respecting the various mis-statements of the prisoner Bacon about the alleged robbery. The Inspector said, that on questioning the prisoner as to the lost clothes, he became dreadfully agitated, and trembled greatly on being told that Mr. Dixon, of Stamford, his tailor, had denied ever having made for him any coat resembling the top-coat he said he had lost. On that occasion, while in the kitchen, witness observed a sort of coal-hole with rubbish in it, and on his expressing a wish to overhaul it, the prisoner again became much agitated, and wanted very much to go, saying he had an appointment with his brother. He (Mr. Young) told him he should have a look amongst the rubbish in the coal-hole first, and accordingly went for a candle. Meanwhile, he left the prisoner in the care of Sergeant Broad; and when he (Mr. Young) was returning, he heard a scuffling noise in the yard, and on entering the yard, he found Bacon in the grasp of the sergeant. Bacon, it appeared, had rushed into the coal-hole, and, after rummaging amongst the rubbish, had taken from it something which he deposited in his trousers pocket. Witness, in consequence, put his hand into the pocket, and there found a watch, the number of which he had, and which the prisoner described as his property, as well as another watch, which he said had been stolen, but which had been since found. The witness produced a piece of rope or thick cord, which was found in the garden of the house. His production of this cord to a certain extent corroborates Mrs. Bacon's statement that her husband attempted to strangle her.

Mrs. Hyde, the witness who deposed to finding blood on one of Bacon's shirts, now said that she heard Bacon exclaim, two or three evenings after the murder, "Good God, how was it I done it!"

Mrs. Payne, Bacon's aunt, admitted that when her husband insinuated that he (Bacon) might be implicated, the prisoner said his wife would not deceive him, or split upon him, or something like that; but she did not distinctly hear.

Mr. Edward Bacon deposed to having received a £5 note from the male prisoner, his father, on the 20th of November last, and this proved to be the note alleged to have been stolen. This terminated the examination, and the prisoners were again remanded.

THE TAXES ON KNOWLEDGE.—The Chancellor of the Exchequer, when the House of Commons adjourned on Wednesday, was waited upon by a large deputation representing the Society for Renewing the Taxes on Knowledge. The deputation endeavoured to show, at great length, that the duty upon paper ought now to be repealed. The Chancellor listened to all that was said with considerable attention, and asked several questions bearing upon the subject. All he could say, however, at the end of the interview was, that he was afraid that this was not the most convenient time for cutting off a large item of revenue.

ELECTION INTELLIGENCE.—Mr. Langworthy, the only candidate, has been returned for the representation of Salford.—Mr. William Coningham has come forward at Greenwich, as a candidate on Radical principles. Having addressed a meeting on Tuesday evening, a vote of confidence in him was passed.—In anticipation of a vacancy arising out of the death of the Duke of Rutland, Mr. Gordon Rebow, of Wivenhoe, issued an address.—Mr. Fuller, the present representative of East Sussex, announces his intention, in an address to the electors, of again soliciting their suffrages at the next general election.—Mr. Hope Johnstone's claims upon the constituency of Dumfriesshire have been recognised by the withdrawal of Lord Henry Scott from the contest.—Lord John Manners and Mr. C. H. Frewen, the rival candidates in the Conservative interest for the representation of North Leicestershire, have issued addresses to the electors.—A vacancy in the representation of the county of Tipperary will be announced immediately, and the Conservatives boast that their candidate, Major Massey, who combines a considerable share of popularity with extensive property and influence, will be returned without opposition.

SERIOUS FIRES.—The premises of Mr. Bennet, of West Street, Golden Square were consumed on Sunday night. The inmates had a very narrow escape—two children having been actually brought through the flames.—The same evening the house of Mr. Tuxlett, green-grocer, Goswell Road, was burnt to the ground; and a woman, who jumped from a window into the road, was seriously injured.—The Hat and Feathers Tavern, Great Gravel Lane, Southwark, caught fire early on Monday morning, and burned so rapidly, that the inmates only escaped by leaping from the windows; fortunately, they sustained no injuries. So intense was the heat, that the front of the King's Head Tavern, belonging to Mr. John Gibbs, on the opposite side of the street, became ignited, and serious damage was also done to several houses in the neighbourhood.

ACCIDENTS.—Two farm labourers employed at Gillingham, near Chatham, died recently from inhaling the fumes of Joyce's patent fuel; they slept in a close room in which one of Joyce's stoves was placed.—A lady residing at Lavender Villas, Wandsworth Road, was sitting by the fireside, when her clothes became ignited, and before the flames could be suppressed, she became so shockingly burned that she died on the following day.—George Asher, a labourer, employed at Messrs. Roberts and Co's, chemical works, at Warrington, accidentally fell into a pan of boiling caustic. He was going over the pan (which has a wood covering, with a kind of trap door or lid, for the purpose of examining the strength of the liquid), and, not having any light, he fell in through the trap door, which had been accidentally left open by the night watchman, who had some time previously been trying the strength of the liquor. The poor fellow was immersed in the liquid caustic, which was at boiling heat, up to his middle. He died the same evening.—A young girl named Pike, of Hereford, was burnt to death a few days ago. She was subject to fits, and it was supposed that in one of these paroxysms she fell near the grate.

SPLENDID POSTAL DISTRICT MAP OF LONDON.

(Size 2 Feet 3 Inches by 3 Feet).

To be issued to subscribers to the "Illustrated Times."

The Proprietors of the "Illustrated Times" desire to announce to their Subscribers that they have in preparation

A LARGE AND ELABORATELY ENGRAVED

MAP OF LONDON,

ON THE SCALE OF 3 INCHES TO THE MILE,

With the Names of all the Streets distinctly shown, and with

THE DIVISIONS OF THE NEW POSTAL DISTRICTS

clearly defined. This Map, which is 2 feet 3 inches in depth by 3 feet in width, will be printed upon a sheet of paper the same size as the "Illustrated Times," and although it is an exact counterpart, not only as regards size, but in point of minute finish, of the Map prepared by direction of the Postmaster-General for the use of the London and Provincial Post Offices, and which is sold to the public at 5s., it will be issued to subscribers to the "Illustrated Times" at

THE PRICE OF AN ORDINARY NUMBER OF THE PAPER, NAMELY, 2½d., a price which, even in these days of cheapness, is without a parallel.

Specimens are now ready for the trade, and it is expected that the Map itself will be issued with the Number of the "Illustrated Times" for February 21. The enormous demand which is certain to arise for an article which the recent Division of the Metropolis into Postal Districts has rendered indispensable to every letter-writer in the kingdom, makes it necessary that immediate orders should be given to the various Agents.

ENGRAVINGS AFTER PICTURES IN THE TURNER COLLECTION.

In the number of the "Illustrated Times" which will accompany the Map, will be commenced the publication of a series of

HIGHLY-FINISHED ENGRAVINGS ON A LARGE SCALE

after the

CHOICEST PICTURES OF THE TURNER COLLECTION AT MARLBOROUGH HOUSE.

These will be produced in the VERY HIGHEST STYLE OF WOOD ENGRAVING ART, and will be printed with the greatest care. The series will be continued from week to week until completed.

TITLE PAGE, INDEX, AND PREFACE

TO VOLUME THIRD OF THE

ILLUSTRATED TIMES

are now ready and may be procured of the Agents, Price ONE PENNY. Persons finding any difficulty in obtaining copies, will, on forwarding Two Stamps to this Office, receive the Title-sheet by return of Post.

CASES FOR BINDING VOLUME THE THIRD

Are also ready. Price 2s. each.

* * A few copies of the HISTORY OF THE RUGELEY POISONINGS, including a long Memoir of Palmer, and a full Report of his Trial, illustrated with Sixty Engravings, remain on sale at the ILLUSTRATED TIMES Office, Price 6d., or free by post 8d. Persons desiring copies must make early application for them.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

R. A. MORETON.—We are unable to answer the question.
ABSTRACTS.—We propose to publish the map and description very shortly.
R.'s sketch we are unable to make use of.
S. W. informs us that the gall insect, recently described in this journal, has been known in Devon for several years. We were under the impression that the insect made its first appearance this year.

ILLUSTRATED TIMES.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1857.

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

HAZLITT observes somewhere that it is no objection to "Junius' Letters" to call them a "tissue of epigrams," for that that is their merit. In the same way, why call a Queen's Speech commonplace, formal, &c.? It is meant to be so. All the choice and secret knowledge of the Executive is kept for their private enjoyment: the public are told what they know already in the language of meagre mediocrity. The Speech is formal and empty as the coat and breeches which some Scotch courtiers once displayed at the palace window, to persuade the populace that the king was still alive. It is a *simulacrum*, as Mr. Carlyle delights to call things—a wooden nutmeg—a paper tiger; in fact, anything you like that is factitious and artificial. It is like most things now-a-days,—when we have chess kings, government by upholstery, and reform by machinery.

There is a strong smell of gunpowder about the Speech, commonplace as it is. Nearly every one of the first fourteen paragraphs refers to a row! There is the bungling delay about the conclusion of the Russian war. Then there is an account of our narrow escape from a Prussian-Swiss war. Then comes Naples, with its possible hubbub from day to day. Next we have another escape—from an American row this time. Finally, we have downright war records, and get a glimpse of our old friend, the "British flag." In fact, the Speech—down to "Gentlemen of the House of Commons"—is Palmerston all over. Like another old gentleman, the Premier always appears and disappears with an odour of brimstone. Just a few weeks after the world began to hope that the era of permanent peace had come, it finds England with two wars on hand again. *Durum!* But it is as well that we should be prepared, by the prominence given to such topics, for a session rich in them; perhaps rich in little else—let us hope the contrary as ardently as we please. To be sure, we must not forget the treaty with Siam; it is "satisfactory," to use the proper phrase—though it will by-and-by (when we have got a good footing there) lead to a Siamese war in due course.

The dignified and minacious business being disposed of, the Speech condescends to vulgar matters, and we miss the Viscount's hand. The law is to be amended—the Bank of England is to retain its privileges. But now we come to the most singular paragraph of all:—

"Her Majesty commands us to express the gratification which it affords her to witness the general well-being and contentment of her people, and to find that, notwithstanding the sacrifices unavoidably attendant upon such a war as that which has lately terminated, the resources of the country remain unimpaired, and its productive industry continues unchecked in its course of progressive development."

This has the charm of novelty anyhow. With all the middle classes grumbling at the income-tax—with all the world terrified about crime—with the London workhouses blockaded by starving labourers—and with the peasants of some of the richest counties in England (*vide* "Daily News" of Feb. 2) living on ten shillings a week, in a style about equal to that of the *portarii* of "Domesday Book,"—we are complimented on our "general well-being and contentment." Of course, our "progressive development" is to be in the same direction, in which case we promise our Ministers they will see some wonderful results of the age's improvements. Seriously, this miserable pedantry—which might look like irony if it were not so dull—is in very bad taste, and unworthy of a Minister whose admirers put him forward as the most popular man of the age.

The questions which, of all others, have been most eagerly discussed by the nation—the criminal question—the financial, and administrative, and army reforms—are all deliberately ignored, as of no consequence. Warlike subjects carry the day, and sufficiently indicate the Ministerial leanings. The further prosecution of matters in Persia and China seems assumed as a matter of course. The latest

"telegraphs" are dished-up as information out of the newspapers, and are not qualified by the slightest expression of regret for the blood and destruction which they imply. Well. The Government takes its ground clearly; it subordinates all social and domestic interests, and ignores all private and humble suffering on the part of the labouring classes; and if this is the kind of thing the English public like, why, perhaps, we have no business to find fault with their consulting their own inclinations. All we can say is, that if this Speech strikes the key-note of the session, we cannot bring ourselves to look forward with any pleasure to the tune.

MAGISTRATES AND THE POOR.

Is there any law in this empire for the relief of the destitute poor? Is there a Poor-law Board? Are there any Poor-law Commissioners, any relieving-officers, workhouses, poor-rates? Or is the Board (which we are taught to believe is so busily sitting at Somerset House) verily and indeed a plane of inanimate wood covered with green baize? Is the law repealed, the relieving-officer a "dummy," the workhouse situate in some pauper Utopia, and are the shillings and sovereigns of the poor-rates changed into dry leaves like the poor man's money in the Arabian Nights?

We assume ourselves justified in asking these questions (in despite of the ocular evidence of those grim brick edifices in Marylebone and White-chapel where the poor are *not* relieved), because there appears to be, at this inclement season of the year, and at a time of most lamentable distress among the working-classes, a reprehensible dearth of energy and humanity on the part of those whose duty it is to administer relief to the necessitous poor. Public charity is abundant; but the public assistance—the right to which is recognised by the law of the land to every Englishman who is destitute—seems, either through supineness or through wilful cruelty, to be withheld as often as possible, and when granted, harshly and niggardly dispensed. The newspapers overflow with accounts of bands of famished men besieging the police-courts, deafening the ears of the magistrates with tales of starvation, stating that they have in vain applied for parochial relief, and receiving that eleemosynary assistance from the private funds of the poor-box which they have a right to demand from the administrators of the fruits of public taxation.

The police magistrates, now-a-days, appear to be the only "relieving officers" who exercise their functions with promptitude, kindness, and competence. We do not wish, for an instant, to cavil at the vast amount of good they do; but it was certainly never contemplated by the Legislature, that the task of relieving the poor should be superadded to the already onerous duties of magistrates, and that they should be almoners as well as judges. Here is Mr. Elliott, waited on by deputation after deputation of breadless operatives. Here is Mr. Yardley, of the Thames Police-court, sending his usher, Mr. Livingston, out with five pounds worth of silver, and telling him to distribute the money in sixpences and shillings to the forlorn objects who crowd the avenues of the Court. Besides administering the law, our magistrates have to perform the part (and excellently they perform it) of Lady Bountifuls; they are expected to distribute quarter loaves, and pay the railway fare home for disconsolate dressmakers, and provide orphan children with new frocks and corduroy trousers, and set widows up in the chandlery line of business. When we see the activity and benevolence displayed by that admirable body of gentlemen, the stipendiary magistrates of London, and the churchly indolence and neglect shown by those whose bounden (and well-paid) duty it is to alleviate the public distress, the queries with which we prefaced these observations will seem, we hope, neither unnatural nor ill-timed.

A SHERIFF'S "QUIETUS."

To be High Sheriff, and so ride in a golden coach, are the aim and end of some men's ambition. We have seen, ere this, on monumental tablets, that Johannes Such-a-one, *Armiger*, had been "High Sheriff of this county," in such and such a year. In these degenerate days the honour seems to be less sought after, and less highly prized. One High Sheriff is rude to the judges, and locks a door upon them; another goes to meet them in a hired fly, in lieu of the traditional golden coach; another suppresses the javelin men, and cuts off the trumpeters, in the judicial procession; and a fourth won't come to meet the legal luminaries at all.

A "little bill" of the charges in which High Sheriffs are mulcted, recently communicated to the "Times," in a letter headed "Shrievalty Expenses," throws some light on the causes of the disparagement into which High Shrievalty has fallen. It appears that, in the course of three assizes in one single county, the gentleman whose duty it is to entertain the judges of the land, was called upon to pay the piper at the following prodigious rate.—Item. For the Judges' servants, £8 18s. 6d.; and for ale for them, £9 19s.

Ten pounds all but a shilling for ale! What an unappeasable appetite for malt liquor in the judge's servants does this argue! What "thirsty souls" they must be! The "ringers" cost three guineas, which must be considered as cheap at the price, seeing that no extra charge is made for being defensed or driven half crazy by the intolerable clangour of the bells. The "use of the pulpit" was charged at one guinea; but we are not told whether this included the use of a clergyman, a bundle, and a pew-opener. The "trumpeters" had £5 8s. between them; and though this seems in all conscience sufficient for a thorough-bred "blow-out" (we are quite guiltless of aiming at a pun), they further shared, with the "clerk of assize" and the "chaplain" in the sum of eleven pounds charged for wine. Then a mysterious individual, alluded to as Mr. P—, charged £10 16s. 10d. for attending at the Treasury, passing the accounts, and obtaining the Sheriff's *quietus*! What is the Sheriff's "quietus"? What is it like? What are its effects—simply sedative or deeply narcotic? Is it a thing, or a man, or an abstract idea? Is it a piece of parchment, or a life-preserver or a bottle of laudanum? Hamlet tells us that a man may—

"—his quietus make

With a bare bodkin."

If the quietus could be produced at so moderate a figure, is not the third of a ten-pound note rather an immoderate charge for the article now?

We ought not to omit a last charge of ten pounds against the Sheriff for "filing his oath of office." We can only, in this case, paraphrase Mr. Samuel Weller's celebrated declaration in *re* Mr. Pickwick's *habeas corpus*—"that he would have three 'have his carcasses' packed" in the time occupied by the officials in drawing out one; and say, ourselves, that we would personally undertake to file a dozen of the very strongest "oaths of office" for a pound.

Is it to be wondered at, that, as long as these "Shrievalty expenses"—half gross extortion, half ridiculous tomfoolery—continue, country gentlemen of station are found chary in accepting an unthankful and vexatious office?

REDPATH AND ROBSON.

We wish to say a word about these wretched men, and their companions in fashionable crime, and that is to deprecate anything more being said about them. Surely no good can arise from that pandering to the morbid appetite for "criminal" literature that marks this age, which fills the newspapers, day by day, with a species of Rogues' Court Circular, with accounts of Sir John Dean Paul's progress in chairmaking, of Mr. Strahan's achievements in the confabulation of blucher-boots; of Mr. Redpath objecting to pick oakum, and Mr. Robson taking exception to the cocoa; and similar details as frivolous as they are repulsive. We shall hear next of Mr. Pierce catching flies to wile away the time in his solitary cell, or Mr. Burgess writing a letter to the "Times" to set the financial world right with respect to the fluctuations in the price of bullion. These men have plundered and forged, and are now justly undergoing the punishment of their crimes. But society has properly done with them when they cross the threshold of Millbank or Pentonville. We have no right to pry into the wretched seclusion of the convict's cell, or potter about the exercise-yard, or peep under the steps of the treadmill, or speculate on the quality of the prison gruel or the toughness of prison beef. Redpath and Robson henceforth belong to the Eumenides. They have been delivered over to the Tormentors. They are civilly dead, and it is cruel and indecent to attempt to invest them with a ghastly and galvanic life in newspaper paragraphs.

SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

THE MAJESTY AND THE ROYAL FAMILY are still at Windsor; and the "Court" records no more important event than the ordinary rides, drives, and royal visits.

THE LENS is commended "that a medal be granted to all persons, of every class, who have been engaged in the several expeditions to the Arctic, whether of discovery or search, between the years 1818 and 1855, both inclusive."

THE OLD BLACK BOY, Chelmsford, which for nearly four centuries has stood on the Essex Road, was put up for public sale last week, and is literally to be knocked down, as the auctioneer's hammer is to be immediately followed by the crash and pickaxe of the purchasers.

THE LAST FASHIONABLE ECCENTRICITY AT NEW YORK is a rage for eating English mutton brought by the steamers—no dinner is now perfect, we are told, without a saddle or leg of English mutton. It is suspected that a good deal of the "English mutton" never left England.

THE FRENCH, their ingenuity sharpened by the late failure in the vintage, have struck out a very profitable if not an honourable trade—they import our raw grain-spirit in large quantities, mix it with brandy produced from France, and then send the mixture to England, and sell it as pure vinous spirit.

THE WOLLEN-MILL, situated near Huddersfield, has been destroyed by fire. Mr. THACKRAY has postponed for another year the publication of his new novel.

THE AUSTRIAN FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY for 1856, it is rumoured is £20,000,000; Baron Bruck is said to be in despair at his ill success in combating the monster.

THE LENS has for several weeks been in possession of a literary review, called the "Aurora." This review has a more illustrious staff of editors and contributors than any periodical in Europe can boast of; that staff actually comprises not fewer than twelve Princes.

THE BISHOP OF GRONOBLE has published a formal recognition of the ridiculous story of the apparition of the Virgin Mary to two shepherds on the Salette Mountain.

M. CHENET, a gentleman of Paris, is stated to have discovered a process of making steel very quickly, and at one-third of the present cost, while particular cases can be reproduced of identically the same quality.

SOME NEW UNPUBLISHED LETTERS AND MANUSCRIPTS OF LERONITZ have just been discovered.

THE AGGREGATE SUM NOW PAID BY GOVERNMENT in mail-packet compensation for conveying seaborne mails amounts to £1,025,000 per annum.

IN MILITARY CIRCLES the belief gains ground that the militia will eventually be organised so as to form a reserve for the standing army, after the principle of the Prussian Landwehr.

THE WASHINGTON OF THE AUSTRALIAN SANDS OF THE RHINE in the territory of the Grand Duchy of Baden produced in 1855 1,545 florins. This branch of industry has much decreased since the changes made in the channel of the Rhine, by which the auriferous strata have been in part abandoned. In 1845, the washing of the sand produced 3,624 florins, and in 1849, 4,717 florins.

THE MILL OF WALLER AND BROTHER, at Bankwood, Chelworth, was completely gutted, last week, by fire.

THE REV. SIDNEY TURNER has been appointed Inspector of Prisons, with special charge of all the reformatory schools certified or sanctioned under the recent act.

THE KING OF HANOVER'S ASSUMPTION of the Grand Mastership of all Masonic Lodges in his kingdom is to be accompanied by a modification of the statutes. One leading proviso of this is, that the institution shall henceforth be based on exclusive Christian principles, and consequently that all Jews shall be excluded.

THE EARL OF ELMSTREE is in such indifferent health that much anxiety is felt by his family.

REAR-ADMIRAL PETER RICHARDS, one of the Lords of the Admiralty, has been appointed Commissioner of Greenwich Hospital. Admiral Richards was last Lieutenant of the Queen Charlotte at Algiers, and has himself won his way to his present high station.

THE NEWLY-CREATED office of Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education will be filled by Mr. COOPER, who will be succeeded as President of the Board of Health by Mr. MONSELL, late Secretary of the Ordnance.

THE QUEEN has appointed the Duke of Rutland to the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Leicestershire, vacant by the death of the late Duke of Rutland. The Earl of Yarmouth is appointed to be Lord-Lieutenant of Lincolnshire, vice the Duke of Rutland, resigned.

THE NEW HOSPITAL-SHIP CALEDONIA, which is to supply the place of the old Dreadnought at Greenwich, has been hauled alongside the latter vessel, which will shortly be removed, and broken up. The Caledonia will then receive the name of the Dreadnought.

MRS. SEACOLE appeared in the Court of Bankruptcy on Friday (30th ult.), and, there being no opposition, she was granted immediate certificates of the first class. She was warmly congratulated by the Court, and said she was quite ready to go out to India if she could be of any service to the army.

MR. CHARLES MATTHEWS, in a characteristic letter, has contradicted a report that he is married to Miss Oliver, the actress.

TWO HUNDRED PITMEN, residing in and around Sunderland and Durham, are preparing to take flight in spring for Australia.

ALL LETTERS RETURNED TO THE DEAD LETTER OFFICE are in future to be forwarded to the writers of them on the same day they are so returned. Very serious inconvenience will thus be saved to the public.

SHIPBUILDING at Pembroke Dockyard is still rapidly proceeding; there are now about 2,000 persons employed in the yard.

THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE OUDE FAMILY have contradicted the assertion that the question has been settled by the grant of an hereditary pension. They say, that the King of Oude distinctly refused any such terms.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON presided, on Saturday, at a meeting held on the occasion of the opening of a new School-room connected with St. Peter's Church, Stepney. The building, a commodious structure, is surrounded by a dense and poor population, consisting principally of dock-labourers and their families.

MR. SEJFRANT BYLES, it is positively stated, is to be the new Baron of the Exchequer, in place of the late Baron Alderson.

WHITFORTH STREET PRISON is undergoing alterations, with the view of a classification of persons confined for debt. It is in contemplation to classify debtors throughout England and Wales.

THE BOARD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND ART has received instructions from the Treasury to include in the estimates of the year 1857-8, a certain sum on account, for the erection of a building for the Industrial Museum of Scotland.

THE RARITY OF THE SMALLER SILVER COIN has been much complained of lately in Paris and in the Departments: in consequence, the Mint of Paris is now coining, in addition to pieces of 5*fr.*, a large number of pieces of 2*fr.*, 1*fr.*, and 50*c.*

THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P., who has during the past week been visiting the Heads of Houses and his constituents at the University of Oxford, arrived in town on Saturday.

THE KING OF BAVARIA has given 37,000 *scris* from his private purse for the promotion of literary and scientific objects. Dr. Moritz Wagner and Herr Gumbinger are to receive 12,000 *scris* of the sum for a scientific expedition round the world in the Austrian frigate Novara; the collections they may make to be deposited in the Bavarian institutions.

THE HAND, ARM, AND FOOT OF THE PRINCE IMPERIAL of France were recently modelled without awakening him from his sleep during the operation.

DOMESTIC SERVANTS are now at a great premium in Canada.

NO HEAVY FALL OF SNOW took place, on Saturday, in the town and neighbourhood of Havre, that no vessel could venture out of the port; and, as a matter of precaution, it was deemed advisable to ring the bell on the north-west jetty for upwards of three hours, as a warning to any vessels that might attempt to enter.

A SALE OF HIGH-CLASS PAINTINGS took place, last week, in the gallery of Messrs. Brown and Macindoe, Glasgow, when some very high prices were paid. The highest sum realised was for a painting by Mr. Thomas Faed, entitled "The Reapers—Morning," which was purchased by an Ayrshire gentleman for £750.

A SHOCK OF EARTHQUAKE—very slight—was felt last week near Nottingham.

THE EARL OF HAREWOOD, who, as we recorded last week, was thrown from his horse, and seriously injured, is still in a rather precarious condition.

THE REMAINS OF THE LATE DUKE OF RUTLAND, which lay in state, were visited by above three thousand seven hundred persons. The name and address of each person were taken down on entering.

A MUSIC SCHOOL is to be founded at the Surrey Hall. The prospectus announces the provision of gratuitous instruction, and the introduction to the public of young professors. Mr. Julian is at its head. The scheme possibly implies that sort of apprenticeship, which is not uncommon on the Continent, in which education is paid for by service.

DR. LIVINGSTONE has been presented with the freedom of the City of Glasgow. The Doctor is a native of the neighbouring parish of Blantyre.

THE LOUNGER AT THE CLUBS.

To the gent and the snob any person who is before the public is a prey; he talks of them with the utmost familiarity, and criticises not only their public performances, but their private lives and actions. With him Mr. Buckstone is "little Buck," Mr. Keeley "Bob," Mr. Thackeray "old Thack," while even the great ones of the earth do not escape him, and now that the session is on, the coffee-rooms and bars frequented by the gents will ring with the names of "Old Pam" and "Dizzy." While the snob confines himself to talking of these people, he is sure to be pitted; but when he takes pen in hand, and in his own peculiar idiomatic vernacular, writes slangy, vulgar lies, it is time he should be kicked. Many of the "London correspondents" of provincial newspapers are persons of this class, and it was from one of them that the rumour of Miss Oliver's marriage to Mr. Charles Matthews arose. This did but little harm: the lady received many pretty compliments, and the public were regaled in the "Times" with such a letter as Charles Matthews alone can write. This case has been followed by another. A Sunday sporting print, under the head of "Curious gossip," copied from a Boston (U.S.) journal a paragraph relative to the approaching marriage of Mr. Albert Smith with Miss Mary Keeley. This paragraph was written in the slangiest and worst style of the defunct "Satirist" newspaper, and was one which I should have imagined would never have been inserted by any respectable English sub-editor, as Christian names were freely used, and personal remarks scattered throughout it. In its second edition, the paper readily published Mr. Smith's denial of the whole affair, but the paragraph should never have been inserted.

The Committee for directing the Artists' and Amateurs' Conversazione have moved into the large room at Willis's. Their nights of meeting are fixed as follows:—Feb. 5, March 5, April 2, May 7. Commencing at a quarter before eight o'clock.

Dr. Mackay, the popular poet and song-writer, purposes leaving this country in the autumn, for the purpose of lecturing in the United States.

Mr. Willert Beale is the great entrepreneur of talent, or what the "Iner" calls "a caterer for the public." Mr. and Mrs. German Reed, Mr. Thackeray, and Mr. W. H. Russell, are all permanently engaged by this gentleman for a considerable period.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

THE MAGAZINES.—THE GATES OF THE EAST.*

THE editor and proprietors of "Blackwood" may well be proud of their new acquisition in the person of the writer of the "Scenes of Clerical Life." New? I think so, though there are times when I imagine that Colonel Bruce Hamley knows a good deal about it. There is a character in "Lady Lee's Widowhood"—a curate, the Rev. Josiah Somebody—who is very like poor Amos Barton, whose "sad fortunes" have been portrayed in the last two numbers of "Blackwood." Never mind; whoever it may be, writes with an ease and aptitude, and a delightful mixture of humour and pathos, that it is refreshing to meet with in these days of filtered, lady-like sentiment and forced buffoonery.

Take this opening of the chapter, where the author communes with his reader, and agree with me at once that it is the writing of a man of the world, endowed withal with kindly feelings and a thorough insight into human nature:—

"The Rev. Amos Barton, whose sad fortunes I have undertaken to relate, was you perceive, in no respect an ideal or exceptional character; and perhaps I am doing a bold thing to bespeak your sympathy on behalf of a man who was so very far from remarkable; a man whose virtues were not heroic, and who had no undetected crime within his breast; who had not the slightest mystery hanging about him, but was palpably and unmistakably commonplace; who was not even in love, but had had that complaint favourably many years ago. 'An utterly uninteresting character!' I think I hear a lady reader exclaim—Mrs. Farthingale, for example, who prefers the ideal in fiction; to whom tragedy means crime, tippets, adultery, and murder; and comedy the adventures of some personage who is 'quite a character.'"

"But, my dear madam, it is so very large a majority of your fellow-countrymen that are of this insignificant stamp. At least eighty out of a hundred of your adult male fellow-Britons returned in the last census, are neither extraordinarily silly, nor extraordinarily wicked, nor extraordinarily wise; their eyes are neither deep and liquid with sentiment nor sparkling with suppressed witteisms; they have probably had no hairbreadth escapes nor thrilling adventures; their brains are certainly not pregnant with genius, and their passions have not manifested themselves at all after the fashion of a volcano. They are simply men of complexions more or less muddy, whose conversation is more or less bald and disjointed. Yet these commonplace people—many of them—bear a conscience, and have felt the sublime prompting to do the painful right; they have their unspoken sorrows, and their sacred joys; their hearts have perhaps gone out towards their first-born, and they have mourned over the irreclaimable dead. Nay, is there not a pathos in their very insignificance—in our comparison of their dim and narrow existence with the glorious possibilities of that human nature which they share?"

This is but one bit out of many against which I find my pencil-mark. The sketches of the Countess Czerlaski, thoroughly real and curious; the account of the clerical dinner at Wilby Vicarage, with the description of the different clergymen—the agricultural, the evangelical, the poetic, the "nice," and the thoroughly good—all admirably limned; and, above all, the death-bed of that devoted wife, than whom no more beautiful, affectionate, sweet-tempered character has ever been drawn. Mr. Dickens himself has never written a more touching bit than this:—

"It seemed as if Milly had heard the little footsteps on the stairs, for when Amos entered her eyes were wide open, eagerly looking towards the door. They all stood by the bed-side—Amos nearest to her, holding Chubby and Dickey. But she motioned for Patty to come first, and clasping the poor pale child by the hand, said—

"Patty, I'm going away from you. Love your papa. Comfort him; and take care of your little brothers and sisters. God will help you."

"Patty stood perfectly quiet, and said, 'Yes, mamma.'"

"The mother motioned with her pallid lips for the dear child to lean towards her and kiss her; and then Patty's great anguish overcame her, and she burst into sobs. Amos drew her towards him and pressed her head gently to him, while Milly beckoned Fred and Sophy, and said to them more faintly:—

"Patty will try to be your mamma when I am gone, my darlings. You will be good, and not vex her."

"They leaned towards her, and she stroked their fair heads, and kissed their tear-stained cheeks. They cried because mamma was ill and papa looked so unhappy; but they thought, perhaps next week things would be as they used to be again."

"The little ones were lifted on the bed to kiss her. Little Walter said, 'Mamma, mamma,' and stretched out his fat arms and smiled; and Chubby seemed gravely wondering; but Dickey, who had been looking fixedly at her, with lip hanging down, ever since he came into the room, now seemed suddenly pierced with the idea that mamma was going away somewhere; his little heart swelled, and he cried loud."

"Then Mrs. Hickitt and Nanny took them all away. Patty at first begged to stay at home and not go to Mrs. Bond's again; but when Nanny reminded her that she had better go to take care of the younger ones, she submitted at once; and they were all packed in the pony-carriage once more."

"Milly kept her eyes shut for some time after the children were gone. Amos had sunk on his knees, and was holding her hand while he watched her face. By and by she opened her eyes, and drawing him close to her, whispered slowly,

"My dear—dear—husband—you have been—very—good to me. You—have—made me—very—happy."

"She spoke no more for many hours. They watched her breathing becoming more and more difficult, until evening deepened into night, and until midnight was past. About half-past twelve she seemed to be trying to speak, and they leaned to catch her words."

"Milly—milly—didn't you hear it?"

"Amos knelt by the bed, and held her hand in his. He did not believe in his sorrow. It was a bad dream. He did not know when she was gone. But Mr. Brand, whom Mrs. Hickitt had sent for before twelve o'clock, thinking that Mr. Barton might probably need his help, now came up to him and said,—

"She feels no more pain now. Come, my dear sir, come with me."

"She isn't dead?" shrieked the poor desolate man, struggling to shake off Mr. Brand, who had taken him by the arm. But his weary, weakened frame was not equal to resistance, and he was dragged out of the room."

The other articles in "Blackwood" are scarcely as interesting as usual. There is a political paper on the "War in Asia," in which it is stated that the grounds upon which our Government, in the proclamation of war, has justified a recourse to hostilities, are quite inadmissible, for they are founded upon a treaty which never was ratified. The undertaking of hostilities is justified, however, upon one grand and simple plea, namely, that, apart from all conventions, if Persia choose to attack Afghanistan, we have an equal right to act in its defence; and that every principle of national

* Ward and Lock.

interest concurred in urging us so to act. The military measures of the Government on the same question are severely criticised. On the matter of "Ticket-of-Leave," Tleoplennus writes to Irenicus, using no particularly novel arguments, but treating the subject with that spirit of elephantine playfulness for which the Blackwood men are renowned. An article called "Letters from a Lighthouse," is written in a somewhat similar spirit, interlarded with praises of "Blackwood" and Conservatism, touching on *omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*, but principally devoted to the well-merited castigation of Sir Robert Peel, garrotting, and tickets-of-leave. The concluding article is a laudation of Lord St. Leonards' political and legal labours.

The pleasantest paper in "Fraser" is called "A Christmas week in Glasgow," from the same pen which gave us a description of "Glasgow Down the Water." Here we have spirited, good-tempered sketches of the journey down, of the west end of the city, of a walk in the new park, of a Glasgow young lady, of the cathedral and the necropolis, of Glasgow business and Glasgow Sundays, all written with kindly feeling and talent. There is also the second instalment of the "Interpreter," by Mr. Whyte Melville, a capital description of a visit to Kars while in the hands of the Russians, a mysterious and romantic story called "The Three Numbers," and a comprehensive view of the life and writings of Swedenborg. An article on Poets, Poetry, and Critics, under the title of "Little Lessons for Little Poets," gives us a very impartial review of Mr. Gerald Massey's last work, and administers a wholesome castigation to such pretenders to the divine *afflatus* as Mr. Phillipson and Mr. Edmund Peel, while Mr. W. C. Bennett, Miss Hinxman, and Mr. W. R. Casells are praised and encouraged. The political article is on the "War with China," in which the course taken by our Government is warmly approved.

In "Bentley's Miscellany" the two most noticeable papers are the continuation of Mr. Dudley Costello's new novel, "The Millionaire of Mincing Lane," and the second of a new gallery of theatrical portraits, by Mr. T. P. Grimsted, "Mrs. Glover" being the subject of the author's present essay.

"The Train" is pleasant and varied. The heavier papers are an essay on "Old English Ballads and Ballad Tunes," in which Mr. Palgrave Simpson gives us the best and most telling parts of Mr. Chappell's recently published work; and an article on "Literature and the Army," descriptive of the varied literary tastes of our officers, and showing how little is, and how much might be, done by men compelled to the dull monotony of barrack life. Two of the best papers in the number, "Household Words"—like in their treatment, are "The Surrey Side of the Seine," by Mr. J. Carell, and the "Newgate Fair" of Mr. Godfrey Turner. Both these articles are written with sincerity, earnestness, and great descriptive power. Mr. Turner's essay more particularly may rank with anything that has appeared on the subject from the pens of more celebrated writers. We have also a "Dialogue of the Living," by Mr. Hollingshead, amusing and discursive, as quaint and as interesting as the conversations between Tleoplennus and Irenicus in "Blackwood," without that affectation of knowledge, or that political bias, which mars the reader's enjoyment of these last-named dialogues. Other papers in the "Train" are "An Actor's Story," by Mr. Edmund Yates; a satirical article entitled "Keep Moving," by Mr. J. H. Friswell; a German story, called, "Look before you Leap," by Mr. J. V. Bridgeman, and some ludicrous verses by Mr. Frank Smedley.

"Tait" has a capital number this month. An article called "A Slave Sale in America," bears upon it the impress of truth; and, to the thinking mind, will do more for the cause of abolition than all the highly-coloured painting of an "Uncle Tom," or a "Dred." The writer of a paper on the "Civil Service Superannuation Fund," speaks bold and well, and without mincing the matter. By extracts from the published evidence before the Committee, he shows the position of Government clerks, accuses Sir James Graham of gross misrepresentation in his evidence, and concludes by an expression of opinion that a more glaring act of injustice has never been perpetrated by the Government, or one which has entailed more misery upon a large body of men, by depriving their families of future support, and themselves of present comfort and peace of mind. There is a good story called the "Face at the Window," a letter, or rather a series of letters, called "Broken Memories," two or three pretty bits of verse, and a capital instalment of "Tangled-Talk," containing much shrewd sense and worldly wisdom.

Our friends of the "London University" have a great deal of work before them, ere they can compete in literary excellence at least, with their Oxford and Cambridge brethren. The essays of the students at the two last-named seats of learning, show very great promise, and hold out a hope to the reading public of much future excellence. The magazine published by the London University students is meagre, dry, and uninteresting. The essays lack erudition, the criticisms show but little reason, the would-be smart writings are devoid of humour. None but an amateur periodical would have printed such feeble scintillations of wit as the "Epigrams" contained in this month's number, or such dull platitudes as those contributed by the sketched of the "Policeman."

The "Gates of the East" is a pamphlet on the subject of connecting the Red Sea with the Mediterranean by means of a canal through the Isthmus of Suez, in which the question is treated by the author, Mr. C. L. Kenney, in a lucid, comprehensive, and withal most readable manner.

THE THEATRICAL LOUNGER.

THE new piece, the "Black Book," which was produced at Drury Lane on Monday night, turns upon the old story of a man personating a demon, and assuming the possession of demonic influence to frighten the wicked and reward the virtuous. It was successful, but sadly wants compression. The acting of Mr. Charles Matthews, Miss Oliver, and Miss Cleveland, was excellent.

Mr. and Mrs. Barney Williams have returned to the Adelphi, and are playing with much success.

On Thursday "Richard the Second" was performed at Windsor Castle; it will be immediately produced at the Princess's.

RIGHT ROYAL PATRONAGE OF THE DRAMA.—Mr. James Rogers, the well-known comedian at Olympic Theatre, waited on Mr. Elliott, at the Lambeth Police-court, and handed to his Worship the sum of 13*s.* 4*d.*, with the following note:—"Sir,—Allow me to present to the poor-box the enclosed 13*s.* 4*d.*, being the amount I received for performing at Windsor Castle, on Wednesday evening last. I am, Sir, JAMES ROGERS." It appears that the remuneration of such members of the Olympic Company as performed before the Queen and Court on Wednesday, was calculated at an ordinary night's pay.

THE TURNER WATER-COLOURS.—A hundred water-colour drawings of the great artist Turner, are now exhibited at Marlborough House. They consist chiefly of the drawings from the famous Liber Studiorum, in which the medium employed is sepia or Vandyke brown; of the well-known series of drawings called "English Rivers;" of those which illustrate the course of the Seine; and of the exquisite drawings for the vignettes to Rogers's "Italy." These, with the great landscapes of Edinburgh, painted in the year 1800, the "Capture of Fort Bard" in 1805, "Ivy Bridge," also an early drawing, and "Folkestone," will be found to exhaust the number specified.

POLITICAL ENTERTAINMENTS.—Viscount Palmerston, as First Lord of the Treasury, gave a dinner on Monday evening to a large number of Members of the House of Commons, supporters of the Government. The Queen's Speech was read by the Noble Viscount to his guests after the banquet.—Earl Granville, Lord President of the Council, entertained, on the same evening, the supporters of the Government in the House of Lords.—The Earl of Derby gave a dinner to a party of Peers, supporters of his views; and Mr. Disraeli received a large number of the Members of the Opposition in the House of Commons.

CLERICAL GOSSIP.—The Lord Bishop of London, attended by his chaplain, was twice present on Sunday week at the church of St. Barnabas, Fimlico.—A report has reached us, that, after the close of the coming session of Parliament, two prelates of the province of Canterbury propose following the example set by the Bishop of Exeter four years ago, and will hold diocesan synods.—In reference to a paragraph which appeared in our last, to the effect that Mr. Milman, son of the Dean of St. Paul's, was to receive the vacant rectory of St. Giles's, Cripplegate, we have since learned that he declines to be responsible for so heavy a charge, but that he will, in all probability, be appointed to the living vacated by the nominee of the Dean and Chapter.—The Bishop of London has appointed the Rev. J. Hampden Gurney, Rector of St. Mary's, Marylebone, to the Honorary Canonry in St. Paul's Cathedral, vacated by the death of the late Rev. Thomas Bowdler.—In and after the third week in February the Bishop of London will hold his receptions at London House on Tuesdays, instead of Fridays, as heretofore.—In accordance with the citations from the archbishop, the prelates and clergy of the province of Canterbury assembled in convocation on Wednesday at Westminster.



COMING OF AGE OF THE EARL OF LINCOLN: CLUMBER, THE SEAT OF THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.

COMING OF AGE OF THE EARL OF LINCOLN.

We cannot wonder at the interest excited in the neighbourhood of Clumber, on the occasion of the Earl of Lincoln's coming of age, when we consider the extent of territory to which the young nobleman is heir, and the local influence which his family has acquired by long possession. Nor is the Earl of Lincoln without those hereditary claims to respect, which, rightly or wrongly, are in many cases recognised by the inhabitants of English counties. One Clinton flourished in the time of the Conqueror; another was summoned to Parliament by "the first great Edward;" and ever since that period, the male line has, without intermission, been represented by Peers of Parliament. In the reign of Elizabeth, the ninth Lord Clinton, being High Admiral, was for distinguished services created Earl of Lincoln. The seventh Earl espoused the sister of Thomas Pelham, Duke of Newcastle; and his second son, the ninth Earl, having married his cousin, the daughter and heiress of Henry Pelham, sometime Prime Minister, assumed, by Royal license, the surname so intimately associated with the political history of England, in days when the country was governed by "the great Revolution families." The present Duke of Newcastle is representative of the Pelham-Clintons, and father of the young Earl of Lincoln, in whose honour the festivities have just taken place at Clumber.

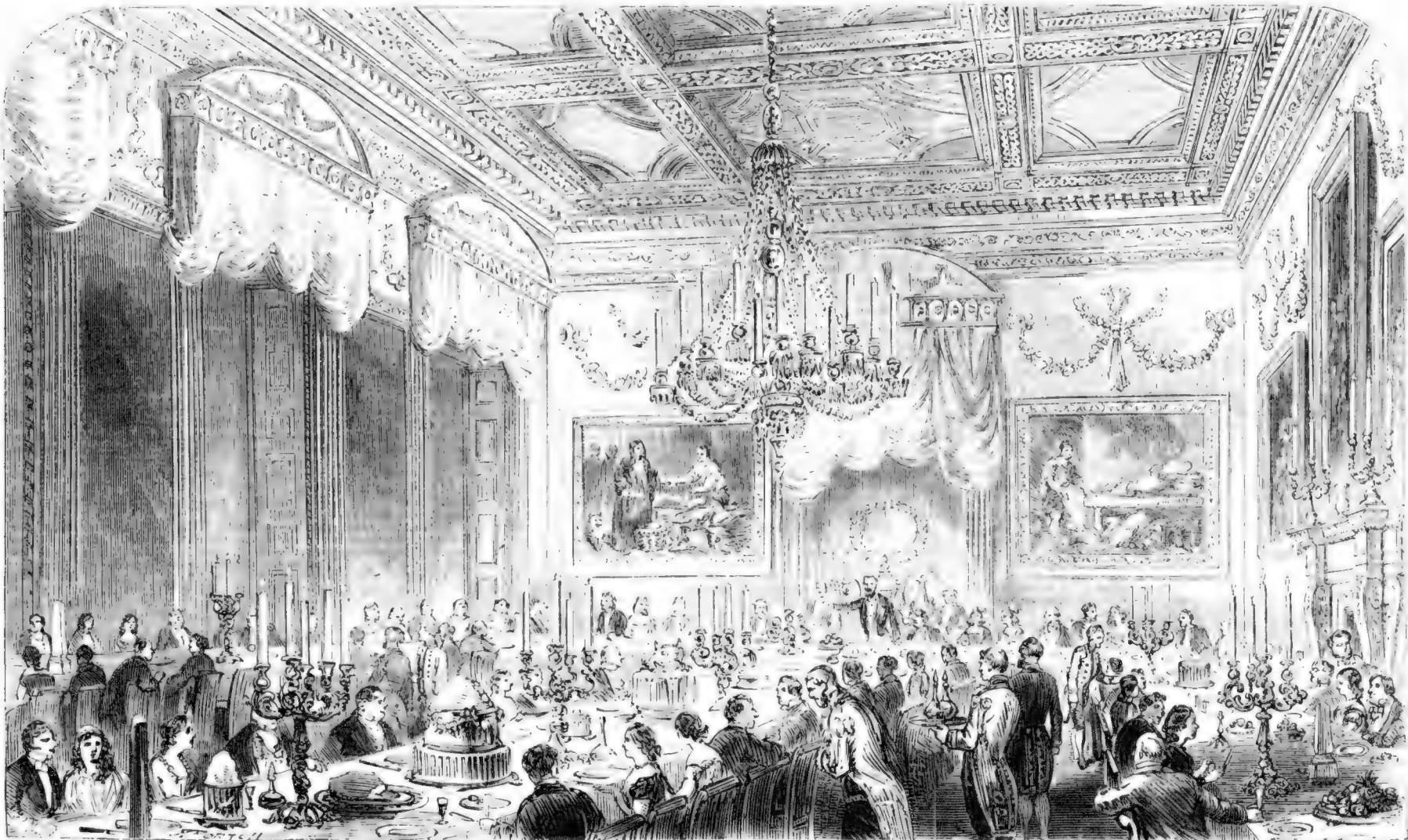
Clumber is known as one of the most princely residences in England. Situated almost in the centre of a fine park, and on the border of a handsome and spacious lake, it attracts not only by the elegance of its design and nobleness of its dimensions, but by the extremely picturesque character of its site. It was built about 1770, and came, it appears, into the possession of the family of the present Duke of Newcastle by marriage. It consists of three fronts; in that facing the lake there is a handsome Ionic colonnade, and an elegant terrace in the Italian style, leading, by flights of



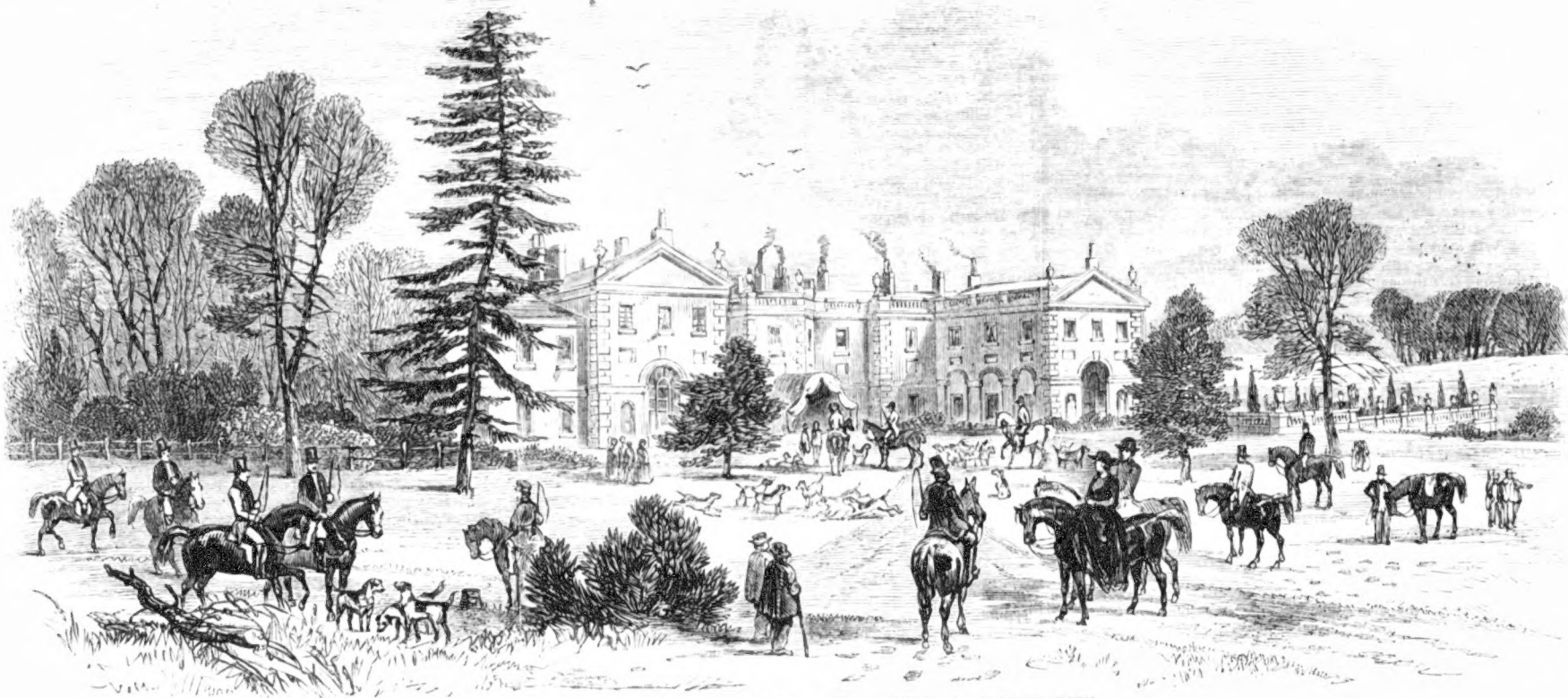
SERVING THE GUESTS WITH MULLED WINE FROM THE CRIMEAN VASE.

steps, to the water. This terrace, which is considered one of the finest in the kingdom, is laid out in ornamental flower-beds, and in the centre, a splendid white marble fountain, with two basins, supported by dolphins, showers its "sheet of diamond-drift and pearly hail." On the east of the terrace are the conservatory and aviary; and along the side of the lake extends, for about a quarter of a mile from the terrace, a delightful walk, which winds its way through the most bewitching scenery. The interior of the mansion is no less magnificent. A spacious and lofty entrance-hall, supported by pillars, and decorated with paintings, antique busts, inlaid marble tables, and a fine marble medallion of a dolphin and Tritons, leads to a noble staircase, railed with richly gilt iron-work, and adorned with a number of articles of vertu, including a marble model of the Laocoon group, a bust of the late Duke, and a fine painting by Snijders, representing a lioness attacking a wild bear. The dining room is a splendid chamber; the ceiling and panels are richly stuccoed and gilt, and the walls are decorated with some most valuable paintings, seven of them alone being estimated at £25,000—namely, two landscapes by Zuccarelli, a picture of dead game by Wenix, and four market pieces the joint production of Snijders and Long John. The small dining room contains two paintings of fruit and flowers by Van Os, reckoned by connoisseurs to be "perfect gems," and also the famous picture of "Sigismunda weeping over the heart of Tancred." The library, which is 15 feet long, 31 feet wide, and 21 feet high, is fitted up with rich mahogany bookcases, containing a splendid collection of works, and is surrounded by an elegant gallery with gilded railings. A Corinthian arch, with jasper columns, opens into the reading room, which communicates with the terrace.

It was on Tuesday, the 27th ult., that the festivities which our engravings illustrate, commenced at the ducal seat of Clumber. The coming of age of Lord Lincoln was not the only circumstance celebrated on the occasion.



THE DINNER TO THE TENANTRY.



THE MEET OF THE MEMBERS OF THE RUFFORD HUNT IN CLUMBER PARK.

The Duke's only and much-beloved daughter, and who has earned the "golden opinions" of all who have the honour of her acquaintance, made her *début* last year. The Duke and his second son, Lord Edward, had been in the Crimea, and were happily preserved from the dangers incident to that field of carnage; while Lord Arthur, who had been before Cronstadt, has also safely returned from a second expedition with the fleet. They were also understood to be in commemoration of the reinstatement of the Duke in an important family dignity—the distinguished office of lord-lieutenant of the county.

So far as the Earl of Lincoln was concerned, we believe that the young nobleman attained his majority on the 25th of January, 1855. Owing to our country at that time being engaged in a sanguinary war with Russia, the Noble Duke deferred celebrating "the coming of age" of his presumptive heir. With due deference to the praiseworthy motives which actuated the Duke at that time, the leading towns in the county of Nottingham connected with the house of Pelham-Clinton resolved to celebrate, on its occurrence, with all due honours, the Earl's majority. The inhabitants of Worksop, especially, joined by a considerable number of the tenantry on the Duke's estates, held a banquet on a grand scale in the



TAPPING THE BARREL OF ALE BREWED THE YEAR OF EARL LINCOLN'S BIRTH.

assembly-room of that town, which was beautifully and appropriately decorated for the purpose, and at which the utmost enthusiasm prevailed. Congratulatory addresses, alluding to this felicitous circumstance, numerous signed by persons of different political and religious creeds, were presented to the Duke, all expressive of the highest admiration for his deep attachment to the house of which he is the head.

When time had passed on, and the day was fixed upon, every preparation was made to render the occasion memorable. All the approaches to Clumber House were indicated by lighted lamps. At the junction of various roads, guides were stationed and bonfires lit, which, seen in the distance, gave the park a novel and picturesque appearance. His Grace planned and directed all the arrangements, and they proved most admirable. Seven hundred invitations to the nobility and gentry of the county brought together an assembly of between five and six hundred ladies and gentlemen, comprising the *haute volée* of Nottinghamshire—its rank, fashion, and, we must add, its beauty—the last being represented by a display which was perfectly dazzling.

By nine o'clock, the illumination of Clumber was completed; and soon after, the guests began to arrive. The appearance of the grounds on approaching was striking in



THE BALL IN THE LIBRARY AT CLUMBER.

the extreme, from their being lighted up at the guide-posts, where men were also stationed to point the way, and afford every facility to the arriving guests. For a considerable distance nearer the ducal mansion the scene was heightened to a surprising degree of brilliancy by the profusion of lights in the avenues, and during the last mile in approaching Clumber, at the hour announced for receiving the company, the effect was amazingly increased by the addition of the long continuous line of carriages, extending the whole mile in length, slowly curving round the carriage sweep, and drawing up at the hall. The hall-door was protected by a temporary verandah, expressly erected for the reception of the ladies from their carriages. The guests on entering, were announced and ushered into the drawing-room, where they were in succession formally received by the Duke, and his youthful daughter, Lady Susan Pelham Clinton, whose grace and beauty were the theme of universal admiration. They occupied a position near the door, and did the honours in a manner which highly gratified every individual presented to them.

THE BALL IN THE LIBRARY.

Passing onwards through the grand suite of rooms, the guests reached the ball-room in the grand library, the floor of which had the wax scraped off by order of his Grace, in order to adapt it for dancing, doubtless very much to the dismay of the servants, who had been polishing it up for years in the idea of chalking over in the usual fashion its gay and glassy surface for such an occasion as this. The gallery which runs round this superb apartment was magnificently lighted with wax lights intermingled with camphine, rendering the ball-room atmosphere as light as day and as nellow as sunshine; and shedding the purest radiance over the mingled scene of costume and beauty which, as the principal dancing apartment, rendered it the most crowded room of the whole throughout the evening. At either end of the library gallery there was a recess; one occupied as an orchestra, the other beautifully lighted up. We may mention that the whole of the lighting arrangements were entrusted to Messrs. Tucker and Son, of London, who showed very great taste in the adaptation of lamps and chandeliers to the architectural ornaments of the various rooms. Proceeding through the ante-rooms connected with this range of apartments—all of which were hung with the choicest of the superb paintings belonging to the famous Clumber collection—the guests finally reached the other suite of rooms appropriated to dancing, which were likewise magnificently adorned with pictures. In all these splendid haunts of festivity they might lounge at pleasure, the principal dancing saloon alone being continuously overcrowded. The Duke as well as the Earl of Lincoln, and other youthful lords of his family, busied themselves in attention to their guests. The Duke appeared highly to enjoy the brilliant scene which he had conjured up around him, and danced a great deal in the course of the evening—opening the ball with Lady Elizabeth Yorke, daughter of the Earl of Hardwicke, pronounced by many of those present the belle of the ball.

About midnight, supper was announced in the Grand Dining Hall, on the walls of which hang five superb and justly-celebrated pictures by Sneyders. This entertainment of course comprised every luxury in provision which the most unlimited means and finest taste could supply. The centre dish consisted of a grand bon's head. The champagne flowed like spring water; and several persons were employed in dispensing it as fast as it could be filled. There was a large display of gold plate; and altogether the interior of the stately ducal abode exhibited a peculiar suitability for such a festivity. Those who were not attracted by music and dancing, found much to engage the eye amongst the paintings of the highest class to be found in the various rooms, galleries, and saloons.

THE CRIMEAN VASE.

Before parting, the guests were served with mulled wine from the punch-bowl, which appears in our illustration as it did when placed in the centre of the hall at Clumber. The stand on which the bowl stood was the gift of the present Sultan to the Duke of Newcastle, and is one of the pieces of furniture generally used in the divans of Turkey. The bowl itself held four gallons; and when we hear of its having been four times replenished, we can hardly doubt that the beverage was agreeable to the aristocratic guests.

ENTERTAINMENT TO THE TENANTRY.

After one day devoted to repose Clumber was again thrown open, and on the evening of Thursday the 29th, the Duke of Newcastle gave a grand entertainment to the tenantry on his estates. The scene was gratifying as the guests presented their wives and daughters to the Duke, and after the company, who exceeded three hundred, had for some time amused themselves with dancing, they proceeded to the dining-room, where they were magnificently entertained. The Duke availed himself of the occasion to address the company, introducing his heir, whose name was welcomed with loud acclamations. The Earl of Lincoln returned thanks, and assured those present that he would do everything to gain their esteem and merit their good opinion, as his father had done before him. The healths of the younger members of the Newcastle family were then drunk; whereupon one of these scions of nobility took occasion to remark, that happening to prefer dancing to making long speeches, he should thank them briefly, and propose returning to the ball-room. The entertainment was of quite as sumptuous a character as on the previous occasion.

It appears that the Duke had resolved, in celebrating his son's coming of age, to treat all persons alike, from peer to peasant. Accordingly, on the evening of Friday, the 30th, a ball and supper were given to the domain superintendents of the household, and their friends, amounting to about 150 guests. Every provision was made for their comfort and enjoyment. The preparations were the same as on the previous evenings, and the Duke and family joined the party until about twelve o'clock.

MEET OF THE RUFFORD HUNT.

On the morning when the festivities commenced at Clumber, the members of the Rufford Hunt had a meet in the park, out of compliment to the young Nobleman whose majority was to be celebrated. The morning, however, proved frosty, and the ground was hard; and those who had indulged in the anticipation of a gallop across the country, were much disappointed. Nevertheless, the scene was interesting; and the Duke appeared to acknowledge the courtesy thus exhibited towards his son by the members of the Hunt.

TAPPING THE BARREL OF LINCOLN ALE.

Among the ceremonies which distinguished the festivities at Clumber, not the least interesting to some people present was the tapping of a cask of ale brewed at the time when the heir to the house of Newcastle first saw the light.

When this ale was brewed, it was placed in a butt, and ceremoniously deposited in the cellars. Since that time, it has been carefully attended to; and being now twenty-three years old, it resembles wine. The process of tapping was witnessed by the person who brewed the ale so long ago; by an old man who, being coachman to the late Duke, helped to fill the butt; and by other domestics who have grown old in the service of the family.

In our next number we shall publish a full-length portrait of the Duke of Newcastle, copied from a very admirable photograph which has been recently taken of his Grace.

THE ROBSON FRAUDS.—The Directors of the Crystal Palace Company have now ascertained the extent of Robson's frauds: £10,996 of Preference Shares, £16,890 of Ordinary Shares, and £915 of Season-Tickets. These figures, however, do not correctly represent the amount of money involved. The Preference Shares are at a slight premium; while the Ordinary Shares are at a great discount, so that the £16,890 could be replaced by less than half that amount of money.

ROBSON AND REDPATH, we are informed, though the information ought not to have been needed, are treated exactly as other convicts. They are to remain for eighteen months at the Model Prison, on probation, before their removal from the country.

MR. M'GREGOR, M.P., has received a timely hint from the "Scotsman." It exhorts the electors of Glasgow to require the Hon. Gentleman to take office under Government as "Steward of the Chiltern Hundreds," or, in other words, to vacate his seat. Mr. M'Gregor should retire while he can do so with (comparative) grace.

A MANUFACTORY OF SPURIOUS TURKISH AND GREEK orders, stars, &c., has been discovered in Constantinople. It was conducted by a Frenchman. Above fifteen persons had profited by this occasion to gain distinction, at the economical charge of 200*fr.* or eight pounds sterling.

LAW REFORM.

WHATEVER opinions may be entertained by speculative or practical politicians as to the changes required, or likely to take place, in our representative system, or in any matter of a constitutional character, there is a large class of questions on which considerable unanimity prevails at the present day, and the settlement of which may be predicted with some certainty. In the existing state of parties and of public feeling, the domain of political controversy has been greatly narrowed; and various subjects on which leading parties were once divided, now form a common ground on which Liberals and Conservatives may unite against the interested supporters of abuses, and the votaries of sectarian prejudice. Of these, perhaps, the most important is the great question of national education, which has happily been elevated out of the sphere of party politics, and bids fair to be settled on sound and comprehensive principles. The controversies and contentions of Whigs and Tories, of Churchmen and Dissenters, on this great subject, have exhausted themselves, and an opportunity is at length afforded for common sense to occupy the ground, and to perform the work.

The amendment of the law falls under the same category. The views first originated by Bentham, Romilly, Denman, and Brougham, are now pretty generally adopted by men of all parties. It has been long seen that no constitutional principle was endangered by the abolition of fines and recoveries, or by the extinction of those shadowy personages, John Doe and Richard Roe. No one has ventured to suggest that England has suffered by the allowance of counsel to prisoners indicted for felony. The admission of parties to a suit as witnesses has been found to work as harmoniously with the rest of our system as if it had existed from the time of King Alfred. Conservatism, as a party principle, if it exist in that form at all, has nothing to say against bringing the law into harmony with the ideas and wants of the age; and the only conservatism which resists necessary and beneficial amendments, is the conservatism of judges, who are unwilling to learn how to apply new principles and rules after having long completed their studies; the conservatism of officials, who fear that their emoluments or leisure may be infringed on; the conservatism of practitioners, who thrive by the existing system; the conservatism of a few weak men, who, notwithstanding thirty years of wise and safe reform, still dread all change as much as Sidmouth and Eldon.

In the amendment of the law much has been done, but more remains to be done. Thirty years ago, the law according to Blackstone was the law of England. From the time when the great commentator, with much learning and ability, but unquestionably under the influence of "port and prejudice," wrote his work, to the time when Brougham made his memorable speech on law reform in the House of Commons, few changes of any material consequence had been introduced. The mitigation of the penal laws, indeed, which Romilly had in vain attempted, Peel had successfully commenced. But with this exception, all the old abuses and absurdities, which Blackstone had so ingeniously glossed over, and which Bentham had so triumphantly exposed, still remained. Since that time, however, the worst of these have been remedied or greatly mitigated. Those evils of our old legal system which Macaulay has summed up in one telling sentence, have been removed or gradually lessened. "Look," said he in one of his speeches on Parliamentary Reform, "at that series of penal statutes the most bloody and the most inefficient in the world; at the puerile fictions which make every declaration and every plea unintelligible both to plaintiff and defendant; at the multiplicity of fines and recoveries; at the chaos of precedents; at the bottomless pit of Chancery!" But whatever may have been done in the way of remedying the evils thus significantly pointed out, our law is still very far from what it ought to be. From the time when Macaulay uttered these words (1831) down to 1853, statute after statute had been passed for amending the law; and yet in the last speech which he delivered in the House of Commons in the latter year, he says, "No observant man can fail to perceive in the public mind a general, a growing, an earnest, and at the same time, I must say, a most sober and reasonable, desire for extensive law reform." Lord Brougham has been frequently heard to declare, when the effects of his great speech, to which we have already alluded, have been mentioned in his presence, that he had then pointed out only a very small portion of the evils of our system that required remedy.

The truth is, that we have only redressed the most crying or flagrant evils, and that our law is still far removed from the simplicity and precision which are essentially requisite. The multiplicity of courts and jurisdictions, the complexity and expense of remedies, the uncertainty of the application of legal principles, the impolicy of various provisions, and the injustice often perpetrated under the name of law, demand a much more enlightened spirit, and a far bolder hand, than have yet been applied to the reform of our legal system. No system can, indeed, be perfect; and evil may occasionally arise when the wisest and most equitable rules are applied to "the infinite variety of human concerns." But let us have, at least, clear and intelligible principles to which we can appeal; let us have rules which are suited to the present social and economical condition of the country. Let our statutes be framed in such a manner that every fresh change shall no longer be fruitful of doubts, and afford a new harvest for practitioners; let us know to what courts, among the variety that exist, we are to go for the redress of our grievances; and let each court be armed with full power to do justice between parties. Above all, let the law be such, and its administration such, that a threat of legal proceedings upon the most unjust claim, shall no longer frighten honest men into a compromise; and the dread of the recoil, which is so apt to arise from setting the law in motion, shall no longer deter the injured from vindicating their rights, and pursuing their just and lawful remedies.

Of all the changes which have been introduced into our legal system during the last thirty years, the institution of County Courts is that which has conferred the greatest amount of benefit on the community at large. Not only have these Courts carried justice to the poor man's door, but they have brought into action new principles and new modes of procedure which must in time affect our whole judicial system. Greater simplicity has already been introduced into the practice on both sides of Westminster Hall since these Courts were instituted, mainly in consequence of the success which has attended the natural and convenient rules by which their proceedings are regulated. It would appear, therefore, wise and reasonable that the authority of the County Courts should be extended; that they should have an equitable as well as legal jurisdiction; that the power of granting probate and letters of administration up to a certain amount should be conferred on them; and that every means should be used to increase their efficiency and to render them still more available for the settlement of disputes. Along with this, however, it is necessary that the procedure of the superior Courts of Law and Equity should be still further simplified and rendered less expensive and dilatory. Great improvements have already taken place, which have been found to work well for the interests of suitors and for the ends of justice; but much more extensive changes are requisite to make the Court of Chancery and the Courts of Common Law true instruments for enforcing rights. The success which has attended what has been already done, is no reason for resting satisfied with it, but affords the strongest grounds for proceeding firmly and boldly in the same course.

In the mode of conveying land great changes are still necessary to meet the wants of the present day, and to free the real property of this country from an intolerable burden. Even with regard to contracts for the sale of goods, the law which requires such contracts, when the price is ten pounds or upwards, to be in writing, is the fruitful source of fraud and dishonesty. A bargain ought to be a bargain—if committed to writing, so much the better; but if only verbal, let it be proved by whatever satisfactory evidence can be adduced. The law of debtor and creditor—the law of principal and agent—the law of partnership—the law of bankruptcy—and many other parts of our mercantile laws—require many improvements, to be rendered suitable to the great commercial system to which they apply, and worthy of the liberal and enlightened spirit of English merchants. Of those parts of our law which most influence our social condition, that relating to the property of married women is by no means suited to the present state of property and the actual circumstances of that important portion of the community. We only mention these as instances of the variety of subjects in our law which demand amendment, and which furnish a large task to the Legislature.

That the task will be accomplished sooner or later, we do not doubt. As to what the present session may bring forth, we must acknowledge ourselves to be by no means sanguine. The very circumstance that questions of law reform have ceased to be party questions, has, as yet, only caused them to be less ardently pressed on, and more capiously discussed. The effect of the weakening of party ties, as exhibited in the present Parliament, has too much resembled what takes place, according to Lord Bacon, when sound knowledge dissolves itself "into a number of subtle, idle, and vulgar questions, that have a certain quickness of life and spirit, but no strength of matter or excellence of quality." Certainly, if the House of Commons faithfully represent existing constituencies, those constituencies most unfaithfully represent public opinion. That the latter, however, must prevail, and influence Parliament by means direct or indirect, is our hope and trust, not merely with regard to law reform, but as to all other matters that concern the welfare of the body politic.

LAW AND CRIME.

THE results of the Smithfield meetings of the unemployed have formed the principal feature of interest at our Police-courts during the week. The poor labourers have resolved upon a plan of action both rational and temperate. They proceed to the workhouses of their respective parishes and request relief. On this being refused (or offered shackled with certain conditions to which we shall hereafter refer) they appoint a deputation, the spokesman of which lays his complaint before the sitting magistrate of the district. In some instances, this produces the required effect, and of these instances we need not further speak. But we will mention the conditions sometimes annexed to parochial relief. One of these is a certain amount of labour for a certain amount of food. To this the unemployed sometimes objects, and when he does so Respectability sneers at him, and Magistracy scolds him as a vagabond who hungers only for the bread of idleness. And herein lies a mistake. The man, though unable to justify himself, is in the right. His instincts place him there. This is the position which he assumes:—"I am a bricklayer, a skilled labourer, willing and able to work at my trade. From causes, not personal nor technical, but national, my labour is not required at this moment. Meanwhile, as I cannot starve, I desire that scanty allowance to support vitality which the law allows to the needy, and which, while in work, I have been taxed to supply to others. I apply for this, and it is demanded of me that I break stones or pick oakum; in short, that I give up my time and strength to work of the lowest and most degrading kind—nay more, work of a penal nature—as if my application for relief were a crime. Meanwhile, I lose the chance which I may have of employment even by seeking for it in the streets. Put me to a true labour test—to the work of my class as skilled labourers—and you will have a right to spurn me if I reject it; but I will not crack stones or pick oakum for the bread I have paid for in better times." Some of the magistrates cannot see this distinction (which every mechanic knows, if he cannot explain), between one kind of work and another, between the useful labour, which sweetens repose and mere objectless toil at the will of another. "Oh them a labourer is a labourer, and may as well grind nothing on a treadmill as make a door, if he can earn his food equally by both. These are hard upon the recusants, and imagine they have at once solved the Smithfield problem, when they scold and dismiss the applicants. Sometimes in-door relief is offered, the meaning of which is, that if the unemployed have a wife and family, they shall be confined separately away from himself, and that he shall also be compelled to submit to the poor-house regulations (including some degree of personal restraint and imprisonment), and thereby prevented from attempting to improve his condition by seeking employ. These terms are refused in (we believe) every case by the able-bodied mechanic. He demands aid from the fund created for the service of the poor, free from the restrictions which are found necessary to prevent that fund being used for pocket-money by the idler and the vagrant. He offers opportunity for inquiry into his own especial case, and applies to the only accessible legal authority to take cognizance of his proceedings.

Certain of the scum of London vagabondage have taken advantage of the cry of the unemployed to infest the suburban districts in gangs, demanding bread and money from tradespeople. The magistrates have announced their determination to punish all offences of the kind with the utmost severity. All who have paid attention to the creditable conduct of the unemployed at their Smithfield meetings, to the honest logic of their speeches, and to the reasonableness of their demands, will run but small chance of confounding the two classes.

A handsome donation was made on Monday last to the poor-box of the Lambeth Police-court by Mr. James Rogers, the well-known comedian. The gift consisted of the entire amount of remuneration received by that clever actor for one night's performance at Windsor Castle. It is true that the sum amounted to only thirteen shillings and fourpence, but it is probable that no one regretted its smallness more than Mr. Rogers himself. He can, however, console himself by reflecting upon the magnificence of his own payment in comparison with that awarded by the Emperor Galba to a flute-player named Canus, who received from his classic Majesty, in return for an entertainment, the sum of fivepence, accompanied by an intimation that it was "private, and not public money."

George Strickland, a clerk in the service of Messrs. Nottage and Co., was charged with having stolen £5 5*s.*, the property of his employers. The case was aggravated against the prisoner by the suspicion arising from his having lately made presents of expensive jewellery to a young lady, and by the fact of his paying his addresses to her as a single man, he having, in fact, a wife living. He was sentenced by the Lord Mayor to the heaviest penalty his Lordship could inflict—namely, six months' imprisonment. This case has been cited as reflecting great credit upon the administration of justice in the City, the prisoner's crime having been detected, and himself convicted and sentenced, within three days, without any expense to the prosecutor.

On Thursday week, the person described as Dr. Sidney Hall, Dr. John Sutton, and Dr. Mannig, and who was captured recently in a cunningly-devised hiding-place in his own house, was brought up on remand before Mr. Tyrwhitt on the charge of attempting to extort money from one of his patients by publishing a confidential communication. An arrangement was entered into in consequence of prisoner's tendering an apology, which was accepted by the prosecutor. Prisoner's counsel assured the magistrate that his client never really intended to publish the communication as threatened. Of course not, nor was he charged with such an intent. The intent was extortion of the most atrocious and abominable kind—the mere publication would have been a useless sacrifice of the expense of printing, and would have acted only as an advertisement, cautioning the reader against falling into the hands of the sender. But the magistrate appeared scarcely to view the case so seriously as might have been anticipated, and sanctioned the acceptance of the apology, saying that it was a very serious thing for parties to have their confidential notes made public. No inquiry appears to have been made as to whether this man was really Dr. Sidney Hall, Dr. Marshall, and Doctor Sutton all at once, any one or which of them, or whether in fact he was a physician or surgeon at all; but, under the signature of Dr. Sidney Hall, a gentleman residing at No. 10, Goswell Road, has written to the papers since the affair, disavowing all connection with, or knowledge of the prisoner. Who is this man, then, just released upon society, who plans a fearful system of extortion, and has a secret trapdoor in his drawing-room floor, leading to a place of concealment to which he retreats when pursued by the police? Surely the public have some right to know, notwithstanding private "apologies."

A shareholder of the late Royal British Bank endeavoured to dispute a judgment against him in his partnership character by the allegation that he had been induced to take shares in the concern by fraudulent misrepresentations. Lord Campbell last week delivered judgment on the question, and against the shareholder. It is therefore decided, as indeed it would not have been difficult to predicate, that whatever may be the value of the plea by a shareholder of such fraud as against his copartners, it cannot avail him against a general creditor. Should it, however, be allowed as valid against the concern, and he be enabled to substantiate it, he will not only be able successfully to resist contribution, but to recover from the concern all moneys which, as such shareholder, he may have been compelled to pay.

POLICE.

WORKING AN ILLICIT STILL.—A tall elderly man, who gave the name of John Hampton, was charged at Wandsworth with being concerned in working a private still. In consequence of large quantities of molasses having been traced to a house in Church Row, Battersea, two excise officers proceeded to the premises, and discovered a large still in full operation, and running off strong illicit spirits. They also found about twelve gallons of illicit spirits, wash tubs, and all the other utensils for carrying on an extensive trade in illicit distillation. The still was an extensive one, being about six feet high, and the quantity of illicit spirits that could be manufactured daily was about thirty gallons, thereby defrauding the revenue of between £8 and £10 every day. The prisoner was fined £30, or three months' imprisonment, with hard labour.

FORGERY.—Henry Edmonds, a clerk, was brought before the Lord Mayor, charged with having uttered a forged power of attorney for £350, with intent to defraud the Governor of the Bank of England. Mr. Freshfield, solicitor to the Bank, prosecuted.

The utterance of the forged document having been proved, the prosecutor deposed as to the absence of any authority, and said she had received the following letter from the prisoner:

"Dear Cousin,—I am the wretch who has tried to sell your stock, but I did not mean to rob you. I am deeply in debt, and was going to borrow some of your money till I could pay you. I feel I am going mad while writing this, but I must tell you all. Oh, to think I should be such a villain as to rob you, my kindest friend; but I have done so, for I received your dividends, and spent them. I cannot ask you to forgive me; but, dear cousin, pray do not upbraid my poor dear wife and children, for they are innocent, and know nothing of my transactions, and they, poor dears, have enough now on their minds, for I have left them for ever, and shall, I hope, soon leave this wretched world also. Oh, my poor father and mother, and dear wife and babes, what they will do I know not. I am quite broken-hearted, and it serves me right; but, dear cousin, if I may say so, I did not intend to rob you, but to return it soon, for I should have been able to get a loan in a few months to the amount I was trying to sell of your stock, and then I should have put it back again. But this is too late, and I am deeply sorry for what I have done; but pray, dear cousin, do not reproach my family with my faults. I am sure it will break my poor mother's heart. Do try to forgive me, or, at all events, forget me. Farewell for ever, and believe, your wretched cousin."

"H. EDMONDS."

"P.S.—May God bless you for ever." The prisoner, who admitted his guilt, was fully committed for trial.

THE SUSPICIOUS DEATH AT PECKHAM RYE.—Richard Smith, who was remanded on suspicion of having caused the death of William Kieffe, at the stable-yard of the Edinburgh Castle Tavern, at Peckham Rye, was again placed at the bar before Mr. Elliott, at Lambeth.

A solicitor who attended for the prisoner, applied to have the further examination postponed, on the grounds, in the first place, that the Old Bailey Sessions were soon to commence, and if his Worship should make up his mind to send the case before a jury, there would not be sufficient time to prepare the defence; and, in the next place, it was desirable that, as Mr. Norton had commenced the inquiry, he should also continue it.

Mr. Elliott had not the least objection to granting the request, and remanded the prisoner.

An application was then made to admit the prisoner to bail, and Mr. Elliott consented to accept two sureties in £50 each.

PROPERLY PUNISHED.—Three men, who gave the names of Ha-pdeff, Gower, and Stevens, were charged at Clerkenwell with entering bakers' shops in the neighbourhood of Islington and Newington, and demanding bread on the plea that they were out of work; and where they met with refusal, helping themselves, and then decamping with the proceeds of their robbery. In one case at Newington, where a young woman was alone in the shop, they were about to help themselves, when she seized a large knife used for dividing the loaves, and made such a show of resistance that the prisoners made off; but the police were on their track, and the three prisoners were subsequently captured with a quantity of bread in their possession. They were identified as having all been committed previously—two of them no less than three times—and were committed to prison for one month each.

BURGLARY FRUSTRATED.—Isaac Carnell, a beerseller in Feidgate Street, Whitechapel, was charged, at Worship Street, with being concerned with three other men, not apprehended, in an attempt at burglary.

Early on Sunday morning, a policeman on duty in Park Place, Mile End Road, observed prisoner and three other men at the doors and windows of Messrs. Alvoe and Naylor, pawnbrokers. Witness found ginkets fastening the doors to the door-post. He succeeded in capturing the prisoner, but the other men got away. It was explained that the ginkets were used to prevent the egress of persons inside the house, on being alarmed. The prisoner offered no defence, and was remanded.

CAB QUESTIONS.—A cabman has been summoned at Bow Street under peculiar circumstances. Mr. Houghton, a silk-merchant, of the Edgeware Road, hired the cab (which was a Hansom) on a very rainy, sleety day, and singularly enough, sat with the window up. The cabman requested him to put it down, as the seat was getting so wet that he would not be able to take another fare that day, and the property would be damaged; but Mr. Houghton refused. The driver then declined to take him any further, when Mr. Houghton told him to drive to Bow Street, which was done. The Magistrate took time to consider the question, and then gave his decision for Mr. Houghton, while expressing his opinion that the case was very hard. As he had delayed his decision, and caused the cabman to come up a second time, he returned him the cost of the summons.—Another question which came before the Police-court was as follows:—A gentleman hired a cab at a railway station, in expectation that a certain train would convey a friend whom he came to meet. The friend did not arrive, however, until some time after, and when two or three other trains had come in. The cabman charged for the time he had been kept waiting. The hirer argued that the cabman was hired for this particular train. The question was decided in favour of the cabman.

AGAR, THE INFORMER.—It is said to be the intention of Government to grant Agar, the approver in the bullion robbery case, a pardon, on condition of his leaving England, and not returning to it. This proceeding, it is understood, is not taken on account of his having given evidence to convict his companions in the robbery, but owing to a belief that he really was not guilty of the forgery for which he was convicted and sentenced to transportation for life, and that the transaction was a "plant" upon him, for the purpose of getting him out of the way.

THE DOCTRINE OF "ELECTION."—Mr. J. Pawl, a Liverpool estate agent, appeared on Saturday before Mr. Mansfield, the Liverpool stipendiary magistrate, to prosecute his son, a young man of twenty-five, from whom, it appeared, the father had received abusive letters, and who had threatened verbally to destroy his father's life. The prisoner's sister corroborated the evidence of her father as to the son's violent conduct, and a letter was read in which the prisoner denounced his father as "a scoundrel and a villain," and accused him of killing his first wife (prisoner's mother). In his defence, the prisoner said that his father's evidence was not to be relied upon, as he believed in the "doctrine of election," and whatever lies he told on earth he would be saved at last. He said that the whole of the ill-feeling between his father and himself was attributable to the conduct and interference of a self-mother. The Magistrate censured the prisoner in severe terms, and bound him over in heavy penalties to keep the peace for six months.

A CROOKED SLIP.—Walter Smith, only thirteen years of age, attired as a sailor, was charged at Worship Street by his father-in-law, a gentleman holding an appointment in St. Katherine's Docks, with stealing three £5 bank notes and other moneys. The prosecutor said he was compelled to proceed against the boy as the only means of saving him; he had already nearly broken his mother's heart. Some time since he robbed her of money and valuables, and a distant relative of a revolver, for which latter offence he was sentenced to two months' imprisonment. He had been three times in a reformatory, but had run away, and on each occasion robbed the institution. Being unable to get him into the Red-hill Asylum, he (the father) got him a ship bound to the Cape of Good Hope. On the 2nd ult. he returned, and although it had since transpired that he robbed the ship's stores, he was received home. On the night of the 18th he crept into prosecutor's bedroom and stole his purse from his trouser's pocket, containing the three £5 notes, broke open a writing desk, ransacked a bureau, and then absconded. The police were informed, but not only was the boy not found, but between the period of his escape and capture he had returned to the house and broken into it through an upper window, and having vainly searched for money left the house again. He was taken into custody through the instrumentality of a tradesman in Stepney, to whom he tendered the notes, and who did not believe his tale that he had just been paid off and left his ship, and that his parents had deserted him. The magistrate, having remarked on the distressing narrative, committed the boy for trial on the double charge of robbery and burglary. On being removed, the unfortunate boy remarked, "It's no use sending me to prison, for I'll not stop long."

PROMPT JUSTICE.—The following facts, furnished by a correspondent, reflect high credit on the administration of justice in the city of London:—"On the return of one of our partners from the Isle of Wight on Tuesday morning last, he was given to understand that a person holding a confidential situation under the firm was robbing them. A specific case of receiving and not accounting for a sum of money, was distinctly proved. The offender had absented himself. A city detective was sent to capture him. In the afternoon of the same day he returned with his prisoner. On the following morning the accused was examined at the Mansion House, and remanded to the Sessions, to be held there on Friday. On this day one of the firm appeared, and having in the meantime discovered that the prisoner had been for the last six months, though a married man, endeavouring to inveigle a young woman into marrying him, and making her hand some presents of jewellery very far beyond his means, he was sentenced to the punishment of six months' imprisonment, with hard labour. Thus, within the short space of three days, he was captured, examined, tried, and convicted, and that without the expense to the prosecutor of a single farthing."

THE ATTEMPTED BURGLARY AT NOTTING HILL.—The two men caught by the police last week in their attempt to commit a burglary at Notting Hill have been examined at Marylebone Police-office, and sentenced, for that offence and for their assaults on the police, the one to six and the other to two months' imprisonment.

CRUELTY TO A CHILD.—A young man, named Hicknett, has been sentenced by the Clerkenwell magistrate to hard labour for three months for savage ill-treatment of his illegitimate daughter, aged sixteen months. He admitted to having beaten it with a cane, and said that once it jumped out of his arms on to the fire! It presented a mass of frightful injuries. The man was loudly hissed by the people in court.

THE GOSWELL STREET SURGEON.—The person (a surgeon he is described to be) who was last week charged with endeavouring to extort money by threats, has been released. The prosecutor consented to accept an apology.—We have received a letter signed "Sydney Hall," and dated 10, Goswell Road, desiring us to state that he is not the person implicated in this transaction.

THE LATE ROBBERY AT LORD SUFFIELD'S.—Edward Kelly and James Archer, the two men charged with committing a burglary at Ganton Hall, Norfolk, the seat of Lord Suffield, were finally examined at Norwich Castle on Saturday. The case was reported in the "Illustrated Times" of January 24. The charge against the accused was supported by a great quantity of circumstantial evidence, it being shown that they were in possession of a number of articles identified as the property of Lord Suffield on the 13th of December; that they disposed of some of them, on the 15th to two Norwich pawnbrokers, giving in one instance false names; and that they sold some other things at two public-houses in the same place. Lord Suffield, who was examined during the inquiry, identified a knife, a concertina, and an opera-glass, traced to the possession of the prisoners; and his Lordship's butler gave similar evidence with regard to other property. The prisoners, who made no defence, were committed for trial at the assizes.

ABOMINABLE OUTRAGE.—At the Bath Police-court, on Monday, two fellows, named George and William Carpenter, were charged with having assaulted and thrown vitriol over a young woman named Emma Burges, a servant living at Beaufort Buildings. About three weeks ago the mother of the prisoners went to the house where the complainant lived, and requested her to take a begging message to her mistress. The girl declined to do this, and as the woman refused to leave the house she was given into custody, brought before the magistrates, and sent to jail. She was afterwards liberated on finding bail. Since that time several letters signed George and William Carpenter, containing the most abusive and filthy language, and threatening to knock the complainant on the head and to throw vitriol over her, were put under the door of the house in which the girl lived. On Saturday evening these threats were carried into execution. As the girl was returning home, she received a severe blow on the head from the prisoner George Carpenter, while the other prisoner threw a considerable quantity of vitriol into her face. The poor girl was for some time senseless, but at last managed to grope her way home with the assistance of a policeman. She was suffering severely from the effects of the corrosive fluid. Her mantle and apron were burnt in several places. In about an hour afterwards the prisoner William was apprehended at a public-house in the neighbourhood. On being taken into custody he said 'I know all about it; it's about the vitriol,' but he afterwards said it was his brother who had done it, and that he had heard him and his wife talking about it for some time before. The prisoner George denied all knowledge of the matter. They were both remanded.

COMMITTAL OF A FARMER FOR SHEEP STEALING.—Mr. William Beynon, a farmer, of Gower, Glamorganshire, who has hitherto borne a character for probity, has been committed to take his trial upon the serious charge of sheep stealing. The charge was preferred against him by a farmer named John Bevan, who occupies a neighbouring farm. It appeared that Mr. Bevan had lost some sheep, in consequence of which he was keeping a look-out for their recovery. In the course of the search, his son went on to Mr. Beynon's farm, and there saw two of his father's sheep amongst a lot belonging to Mr. Beynon. Young Bevan claimed them, on which Mr. Beynon declared that they were his own, and that he had raised them himself from lambs. However, on examination, Bevan's marks were found upon them. Mr. Beynon now begged him to take the two sheep, saying that he would go down on his knees and beg his pardon if he would not take him before the magistrates. Mr. Bevan, however, gave him into custody. It was elicited, in the course of the case, that the sheep-marks of the two farmers were very much alike; and the prisoner, in his defence, alleged that the sheep in question must have broken a fence and got in with his flock. The committing magistrate consented to take bail.

THE ALLEGED MUTINY IN THE MERSEY.—This case was again brought before the Birkenhead magistrates on Friday week. Jeremiah Jones, the only coloured seaman retained in custody from the previous examination, was discharged; and the charge against Peter Campbell, the second mate, for unlawfully wounding James Christie, was proceeded with. After the examination of several witnesses, the case was further postponed; when next heard, it is expected that O'Furber, the first mate, still confined in the hospital, will be included in the prosecution.

MERCHANT CAPTAINS AND THEIR CREWS.—The Merchant Shipping Act contains very stringent clauses with regard to infirmities of vessels, and a case recently heard before the Tynemouth borough magistrates, shows very strongly the necessity for such magisterial powers. Richard Addison, the master of the Scottish Maid, of Sunderland, had the whole of his crew before the bench for mutinous conduct and violently assaulting him on the high seas. The vessel had been on a voyage to Rouen, and was returning to the Tyne with a cargo. When off Shields harbour, the master alleged that he was seized by the crew, and most murderously cut and beaten about the head and person. When the case was heard on both sides, however, it appeared that he had been drinking during the whole of the voyage from Rouen to Shields, and that when the vessel was off the bar, he came on deck "roaring drunk," and belaboured for the watch; and, no one answering him, he had fallen in with one of the seamen named Hodgson, and took the sou'-wester from his head, and threw it overboard. Hodgson had then knocked him down, and there is no doubt, had fearfully beaten him. The master had afterwards got into the fore-castle, and had gone staggering about with a marling-spike in his hand, threatening to kill some of the crew. Three of the men laid hands on him, and held him on a bed until he became quieter, when he was allowed to go to his cabin. He afterwards tore the fore-castle funnel away, and slurred the fire out with a bucket of water as the crew were sitting round it. As soon as the vessel got into harbour, he adjured the whole of the crew into custody, including the apprentices, so that no one could appear to give evidence against him. The magistrates acquitted the mate, two seamen, and the two boys, and sent Hodgson for a month to jail, at the same time expressing their disapprobation of the master's conduct. The men state that they have a strong case against the master if they are allowed to state it, but by placing them all in the dock upon one charge he effectually prevented them doing so before the magistrates.

MONEY OPERATIONS OF THE WEEK.

The state of the money market still affords grounds for considerable uneasiness in the City and elsewhere. Since we last wrote, there has been a very active demand for accommodation, both at the Bank of England and in Lombard Street; consequently, the prices of discount have become high. Notwithstanding that large supplies of gold have been lately shipped to the Continent to purchase silver, the last returns from the Bank of England show a slight increase in the stock of the former metal; but it must be understood that this is merely the result of the repayment of an earlier amount recently lent to one of the Irish banks to just the drain upon its branches. The news at hand from India and China is of a character calculated to have considerable influence upon our markets generally. The banks had further advanced the rates of discount, and the exchanges were considerably against England. Silver, therefore, although a large importation just at hand from Mexico has temporarily depressed the market—it is likely to be in active request for some time, and we may therefore look forward to a dear money market.

The present paper for India takes out about £700,000 wholly in silver, and about £300,000 is expected to be shipped towards the close of the month.

The present high value operates seriously against all new projects. Both here and on the Continent, very few have been started of late; but we must not lose sight of the important fact that the various lines of railway, and that the stock of bullion in the Bank of France, as well as in its branches, is rapidly decreasing. These features are likely to draw from us the whole of the supplies of gold now on passage from Australia—estimated at about £1,300,000—and to check any tendency towards an easier money market.

The public still continue buyers of home stocks; consequently, the supply in the hands of the jobbers is small; still, the market has been very inactive, and prices have had a downward tendency. The 3 per cent. consols, for instance, were 92½ on 1st March account, 93½ at the New 3 per cent. have marked 93½, and the reduced, 93½. Bank stock, 217½; India stock, 218 to 220. India bonds have realised 3s. 3d. to par; Exchequer bills, 3s. 2d. to par; and Exchequer bonds, 3s. 1d. to 98½.

Most foreign securities have been dull. In the quotations, however, very little change has taken place. Guatemala 5 per cent. have marked 38½ ex. par; Mexican 3 per cent., 21½; Portuguese 3 per cent., 44; Russian 4½ per cent., 96; Spanish new deferred, 23½; the committee's certificate of coupon, 6½; Turkish 6 per cent., 83½; Turkish 4½ per cent., 104½ ex. par; Venezuela, 57½; and Dutch 4 per cent., 98½.

There has been a moderate business doing in the railway share market, at steady prices. Ambergate, Nottingham, and Boston have realised 4½; Caledonian, 62½; Chester and Holyhead, 36½; Eastern Counties, 41½; East Kent, 101½; East Lancashire, 95½; Edinburgh and Glasgow, 52½; Great Northern, 34½; Great Southern and Western (Ireland), 112½; Great Western, 65½; Lancashire and Yorkshire, 106½; London and Blackwall, 68½; London and Brighton, 108½; London and North Western, 106½; London and South Western, 107½; Midland, 44½; North British, 40½; North-Eastern, 84½; ditto, York, 40½; New South Wales, 124½; Northampton, 49½; Grand Trunk of Canada, 50½; Great Western of Canada, 25½.

Joint stock bank shares have been steady, as follows:—Australia, 95½; Bank of Egypt, 19; Chartered of India, Australia, and China, 91½; Commercial of London, 26½; London Chartered of Australia, 108½; London and Westminster, 47½; Oriental, 38; Ottoman Bank, 14½; Provincial of Ireland, 49; South Australia, 34½; Union of Australia, new, 8; Union of London, 26½; Western Bank of London, 42.

Nearly all miscellaneous securities have met a dull market. Australian Agricultural, 23; Canada Government 6 per cent., 110½; Crystal Palace, 21; Electric Telegraph, 94; East and West India Docks, 119; London, 95; St. Katherine, 90; Mexican and South America, 3; National Discount Company, 9½; Peninsular and Oriental Steam, 67½.

METROPOLITAN MARKETS.

CORN EXCHANGE.—Only limited supplies of English wheat have been received up to our country, and the market has been improved, under the influence of fine dry weather, but improved. In some instances, rather more money has been paid for fine dry qualities; but the trade has been far from active, and clearances have not been effected. Most foreign wheats have moved off slowly, yet previous rates have been well supported. The arrivals of both English and foreign barley have been rather scarce, and most qualities have moved off slowly, at the late decline in value. Malt has moved off heavily, and prices have had a downward tendency. The oat trade has been steady. In the quotations, no change has taken place. Beans and peas have commanded a little attention, on a short supply. Country flour has been held at 2s. per sack more money; but the business doing in all kinds has been comparatively small.

ENGLISH CURRENCY.—Excess and Kent White Wheat, 56s. to 73s.; do. Red, 45s. to 62s.; Matting Bakers, 36s. to 50s.; Distilling do., 30s. to 40s.; Grinding do., 32s. to 40s.; Great Salt, 80s. to 90s.; do. to 41s.; Feed Oats, 23s. to 26s.; Potatoes, 28s. to 29s.; Tick Beans, 34s. to 38s.; Pigmeat, 30s. to 40s.; White Peas, 30s. to 40s.; Maple, 37s. to 42s.; Gray, 37s. to 40s. per quarter. Town made Flour, 58s. to 60s.; Town Households, 58s. to 55s.; Norfolk and Suffolk, 42s. to 46s. per 280 lbs.

CATTLE.—The supplies of beasts have been very moderate, and all breeds have changed hands steadily, at very full prices. There has been a fair demand for sheep, at extreme rates. Calves, however, have declined 4d. per 80 lbs. Pigs have ruled about stationary. Beef, from 3s. 4d. to 5s.; mutton, 4s. to 5s. 6d.; veal, 4s. to 5s. 8d.; pork, 3s. 8d. to 5s. 2d. per 8 lbs. to sink the offal.

NEWGATE AND LEADENHALL.—These markets have been fairly supplied with each kind of meat, in which about an average business has been passing, as follows:—Beef, from 3s. to 4s. 6d.; mutton, 3s. 6d. to 4s. 10d.; veal, 4s. to 5s. 2d.; pork, 3s. 8d. to 5s. 2d. per 8 lbs. by the carcase.

TEA.—Since our last report, there has been an active business doing in nearly all kinds of tea, arising from the exciting news from China, and further enhanced rates have been realised by the importers. The present quotations are as follows:—Cangou, 13d. to 2s. 8d.; Ning Yung and Oolong, 10d. to 1s. 10d.; Souchong, 9d. to 2s. 6d.; Flowery Pekoe, 1s. 5d. to 3s. 6d.; Scented Cape, 1s. 1d. to 2s.; Orange Pekoe, 11d. to 1s. 4d.; Scented Orange Pekoe, 1s. 5d. to 2s. 6d.; Twankay, 6d. to 1s. 2d.; Hyson Skin, 8d. to 1s. 4d.; Hyson, 1s. 2d. to 3s. 6d.; Young Hyson, 6d. to 2s. 4d.; Imperial, 1s. 2d. to 3s. 4d.; Gunpowder, 11d. to 3s. 6d.; Assam, 1s. 5d. to 4s. 6d. per lb.

SUGAR.—The stock of raw sugar in London is now reduced to 42,216, against 51,000 tons in 1856, and 62,300 tons in 1855. Nearly all kinds continue firm, and prices are fairly supported. West India, has sold at 48s. to 55s.; Mauritius, 50s. to 53s. 6d.; Bengal, 50s. to 55s. per cwt. Refined goods are in steady request. Low to fine grocery, 62s. 6d. to 65s.; wet lumps, 61s. to 62s.; English crushed, 45s. to 46s.; Dutch, 39s. 6d. to 40s. 6d.; 10lb. loaves, English, 45s. to 46s. per cwt.

COFFEE.—Although 443,000 bags of Java will be offered by the Dutch Trading Company on the 23rd of March, there is a steady business doing in all kinds of coffee, at very full prices. Several parcels of native Ceylon have changed hands, at 56s. 6d. to 57s. per cwt.

COCOA.—The supply is very moderate, and the demand is steady, at full prices. Red Trinidad, 73s. to 76s.; gray, 68s. to 69s.; Granada, 70s. to 74s.; Bahia and Para, 63s. to 64s.; Guayaquil, 62s. 6d. to 64s. 6d. per cwt. Low and medium qualities are in steady request, but other kinds are very dull. Carolina, 25s. to 40s.; Bengol, 9s. 6d. to 13s.; Madras, 9s. to 10s. 6d.; Java and Manila, 9s. 6d. to 15s. per cwt.

PROVISIONS.—There is only a moderate business doing in all kinds of butter; nevertheless, prices are supported. "The bacon market is steady, on former terms. In other provisions, very little is doing. We have no change to notice in the value of any kind, and the business doing is but moderate. Wool.—All kinds are in request, but we have no sellers except on higher terms. HEMP AND FLAX.—Baltic hemp is in fair request, at full quota-

tions. Petersburg clean is selling at £36 lbs.; outshot, £34 to £34 10s.; half-draw, £32 to £32 10s.; and Russia, £32 to £32 10s. per ton. We have no change to notice in the value of flax.

SEEDS.—The demand for run has fallen off, and prices are barely supported. Proof Linseed, 2s. 6d. to 2s. 7d.; East India, 2s. 6d. per gallon. Brandy is held on former terms. The prices of Cognac, best brands of 1855, rule at 12s. 6d. to 12s. 10s. 1856 ditto, 12s. 6d. to 12s. 10s.; older, 13s. 6d. to 14s. 4d.; and low to middling, 6s. 6d. to 7s. 6d. per gallon. Gin, 17 underproof, and 18s. 2d. ditto, 9s. 8d.; raw spirit, 10s. 10d.; Geneva, 10s. to 10s. per gallon.

WINE.—The quantity declared for the approaching sales is 12,750 chests.

SALT.—Prices are still very uncertain, but the best qualities are held at 4s. per cwt.

NITRATE OF SODA.—Present quotations rule from 18s. to 18s. 6d. per cwt.

SCOTCH PIG IRON.—Scotch pig iron has changed hands at 73s. 6d. to 73s. 9d. Manufactured parcels are held on former terms. Rails, at the works, 25s. to 28 10s. per ton. Copper is active, at 113s. for tile and cake. Spelter, on the spot, is worth £30 per ton. There is a good business doing in tin. Banca, 144s. to 145s.; Straits, 144s.; British, 142s. to 143s.; and refined, 148s. to 149s. Tin plate supports former terms. L.C. coke, 35s.; I.X. coke, 40s.; I.C. charcoal, 39s. to 40s.; and I.X. ditto, 45s. 6d. to 46s. per box.

HOES.—The market is steady for all kinds, at full prices. Mid and East Kent pockets, 43 10s. to 45 10s.; Weald of Kent, 43s. to 44 12s.; Sussex, 43s. to 43 10s.; and Yearlings, 41 10s. to 43 3s. per cwt.

POTATOES.—The supplies are moderate, and the demand is steady, at 70s. to 130s. per ton.

ONS.—Lined oil has advanced to 41s. per cwt. on the spot. In the value of other oils, very little change has taken place. Turpentine is dull. Spirits, 44s. to 45s.; rough, 10s. 6d. per cwt.

TALLOW.—P.Y.C., on the spot, is now worth 68s. 6d. per cwt. Rough fat has advanced to 3s. 5d. per cwt. The stock of tallow is now 11,729 casks, against 23,657 casks in 1856; 40,470 in 1855; and 38,561 in 1854.

COALS.—Tanfield Moor Bites, 16s. 6d.; Wylam, 16s.; Riddell, 17s. 3d.; Braddly's, 18s. 3d.; Tees, 18s. 6d.; Cassop, 18s. 3d.; Darley Main, 18s.; Walker Primrose, 13s. 9d. per ton.

LONDON GAZETTE.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 30.

BANKRUPTCY ANNULLED.—JOHN BAILEY, Oakenshaw, Clayton le Moors, Lancashire, cotton manufacturer.

BANKRUPT.—GEORGE GRIM, Norwich, boot and shoe maker. —JAMES WATSON, Three Cranes, London, ironmonger. —HACKNEY, licensed victualler—JOHN AINS FERNANDEZ, 11, Union Court, Old Broad Street, City, merchant—JOSEPH THOMAS LAWRENCE, 33, Shoreditch, Middlesex, upholsterer—ELEANOR PORTER, High Street, Newmarket, grocer—WILLIAM WOODS, 51, Union Street, Southwark, book and eye manufacturer—WILLIAM WATSON, New Crane Mill, Shadwell, miller—GEORGE BARKER, Talk on the Hill, Staffordshire, innkeeper and farmer—WILLIAM BURT, St. Stephens by Launceston, Cornwall, builder—JAMES FELL, Liverpool, tea dealer and grocer—JOHN JONES, Preston, tailor and draper—EDWARD BOWEN, 1, Market Street, Manchester, commission agent—WILLIAM DOKO and JOHN SKELTON, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, timber merchants.

SCOTCH SEQUESTERATIONS.—CHARLES BROWN, late of Lower Tooting, Surrey, and 15, Gresham Street, London, now of 5, Fenchurch Street, Edinburgh, accountant—ROBERT VAUGHAN, Ironbrough, by Wincoburn, engineer—JAMES LEADRETT, Edinburgh, spirit and provision merchant.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3.

BANKRUPT.—JOHN BAYAN, Dyers Buildings, Holborn, electro-plate and cutter—JOSEPH CHATWIN, Stourbridge, licensed victualler—GEORGE WOODALL, Carlisle, grocer—JOHN ALFRED HATFIELD, Bradford, draper—SAMUEL BAKER, Birmingham, ironfounder—JOHN HOLMES, Birmingham, builder—JOHN WILKS, Whitby, butcher—WILLIAM TYLER, King's Bromley, Staffordshire, miller.

SCOTCH SEQUESTERATIONS.—JOHN PERCIBON, Bridge of Allan, Stirlingshire, grocer—WILLIAM DONALDSON, Edinburgh, tailor—JOHN CHAMBERS, Blairgowrie, Perthshire, draper.

GREAT NATIONAL STANDARD THEATRE.—SHOREDITCH. Another Juvenile Week. HICKEDY PICKEDY, MY BLACK HEN; or, Harlequin King Winter and Queen Spring. The Pantomime first. Price as usual.

RIDDLES, CONUNDRUMS, JOKES, QUEER QUESTIONS, &c. Order the two funniest books of RIDDLES, A BUNDLE OF FUN, and FOUR HUNDRED CONUNDRUMS, &c. 6d. each, post free.

GROOMBRIDGE and SONS, 5, Paternoster Row, London.

VALENTINES from SIXPENCE to a GUINEA. Each. Orders for Valentines to be posted on the 13th, punctually attended to upon receipt of Stamp for value required. Address, EDWARDS and JONES, Stationers, 161, Regent Street.

MUROMA.—From Dr. GULLY'S Recipe. Prepared and sold wholesale by LEA, PERKINS, and BULLOCKS, Great Malvern. This admirable preparation for the growth and maturity of the hair, now being obtained through all Chemists and Perfumers, and of PERKINS and BARNETT, 22, Conduit Street, Regent Street, in jars, 2s. 6d., 6s., and 10s. each. Strawberry Paste, by the same makers. The best preparation for Cleaning and Preserving the Teeth, in Jars, 1s. 6d. each.

KINAHAN'S LI WHISKY.—This celebrated Old Irish Whisky is highly recommended as the most delicious and wholesome spirit, either for mixing or for medicinal purposes. It is perfectly pure, very mild, and being mellowed with age, is free from those fiery or heating qualities so much objected to in other spirits. Can be obtained in sealed bottles, 5s. 6d. each, at all respectable retail houses in London and its vicinity. From the appointed agents in the principal towns in England, or, wholesale, from KINAHAN, SONS, and SMYTH, 8, Great Windmill Street, Haymarket.

The Best and Cheapest TEAS in England are at all times to be obtained of PHILLIPS and CO., Tea Merchants, 8, King William Street, City, London.

Strong Black Tea, 2s. 8d., 3s., 3s. 2d. A general Price-current is published every month, containing all the advantages of the London Markets, and is sent free by post on application. Sugars are supplied at Market Prices.

HALF-A-CROWN A POUND is now the price of good CONGOU TEA, in 6lb. bags, at the warehouses of the East India Tea Company. Good Coffee in the berry, at 1s. per lb.—9, Great St. Helen's, City.

BEHNSEN'S MARVELOUS TEA,—as the unmitigable means of cure for suffering humanity—as recommended by all those who were fortunate enough to use it, is herewith most devotedly brought before the public at home and abroad.

Is to be bought at J. F. MACKAY, 19, Minch Lane, London.

THE BEST FOOD FOR CHILDREN, INVALIDS, AND OTHERS.

ROBINSON'S PATENT BARLEY, for making superior BARLEY WATER in fifteen minutes

